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JULY 1991 A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

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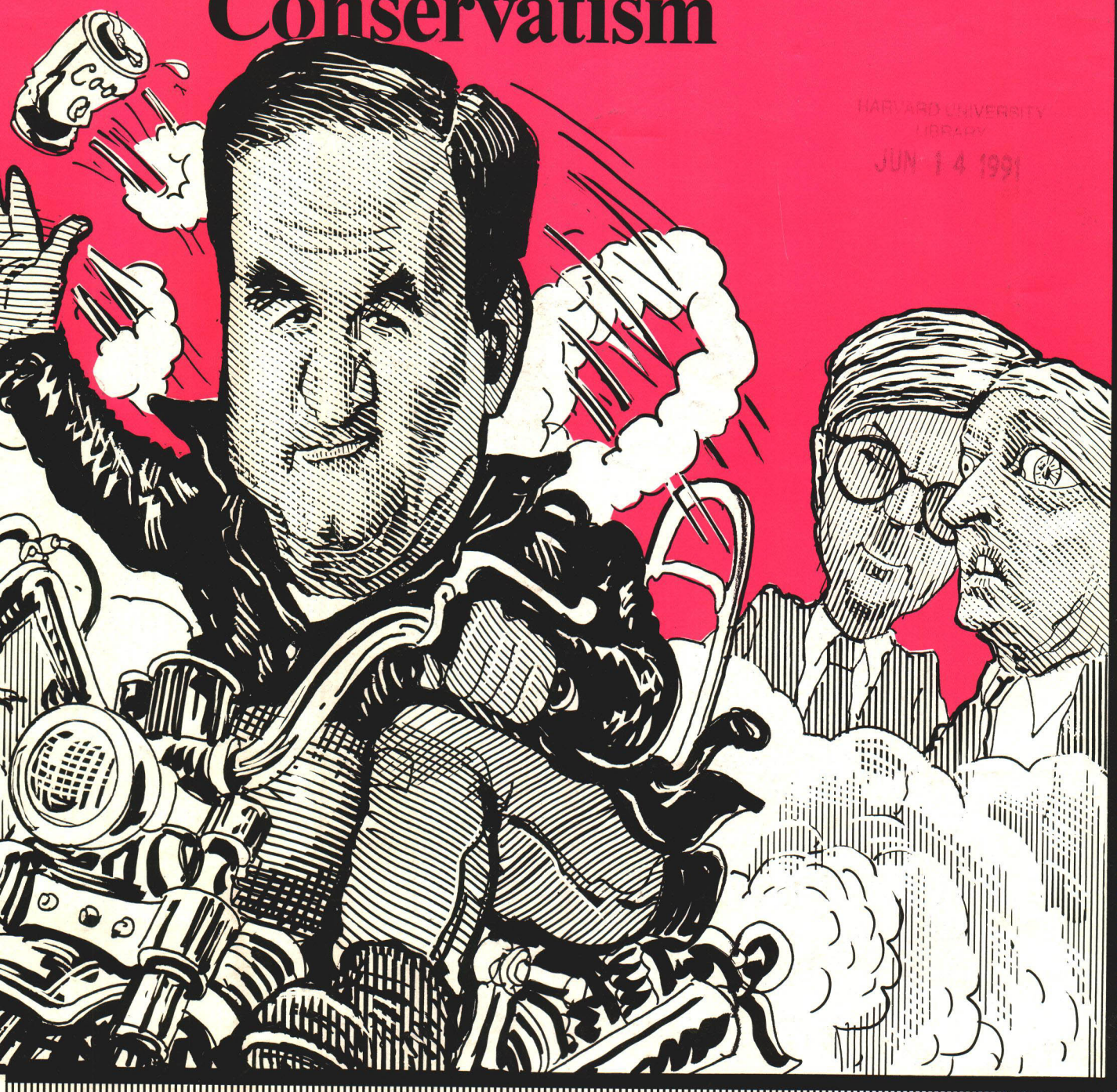

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You deserve a factual look at...

Secretary Baker's Peace Mission

Are he and the President putting pressure in the right places?

In the wake of the Gulf War, which many now believe we ended too early, Saddam Hussein and his army have inflicted the most horrible genocidal slaughter on the defenseless Kurds. But the President and Secretary Baker initially paid only cursory attention to this disaster, even though it is partly of our own doing. They are mostly fixated on the so-called "Israel-Palestinian conflict" and they are bringing renewed pressure on Israel to yield "land for peace".

What are the facts?

■ The Secretary may be handicapped by the fact that, until his recent visits, he had no real knowledge, no "feel" for the country and its unique problems. That is the more regrettable since Israel is certainly the closest (and perhaps only reliable) ally the United States has in the entire region. If he had deeper knowledge, he would realize that in the absence of any reliable and enduring peace with the Arab countries, Israel could not give up any of its strategic heartland, the so-called "West Bank". From the heights of the Judean hills, which he would have Israel yield to the Arabs, one can literally overlook Zion Square in Jerusalem, Ben Gurion Airport, and most of Israel's population centers, industrial plant, and military installations. One shivers at the thought of what would have happened to Israel if Saddam Hussein, instead of having launched his relatively innocuous Scud missiles from 450 miles away, could have positioned his armor, his planes and his missiles in the "West Bank" or on those Judean mountain ridges.

■ There are those who claim that, in these days of airplanes and missiles, territorial depth is of no military significance and that Israel should therefore not hesitate to relinquish the "West Bank" and Gaza in order to attain peace. But that is fallacious reasoning. Israel, according to the assessment of every knowledgeable military person, would be naked and indefensible if it were to yield those territories. If Israel did not control those territories it would, in case of surprise attack, be cut in half at its narrow waist before it had time to mobilize. Why the President and Secretary Baker continue to press this suicidal course on its most reliable ally in the area is a mystery. Is it because they don't really understand the murderous intentions of the Arabs toward Israel? The goal of the Arabs is not the establishment of a "Palestinian State" on the "West Bank". No, the real goal of the Arabs, embedded in the Charter of the PLO and never repudiated, is the total annihilation of the state of Israel. The presence of the "infidel Jews" in their midst is an unacceptable affront to the Arabs. The Palestinian state is a sideshow. Its purpose is to serve as a launching pad for the last "jihad" — finally to chase the Jews into the sea "where they belong".

■ And there are those who say that Israel doesn't really need any strategic depth. All that is needed would be guarantees by the United Nations and a mutual security treaty, which the United States would probably grant if Israel were to yield to pressure and would give up the "West Bank". The United States is undoubtedly the best friend and the greatest benefactor that Israel has. But Israel simply can't afford to entrust its security to a third party. Even with the best of intentions, the United States is far away. It took our country several months, and under ideal conditions, to build up a force to fight and defeat Saddam Hussein. If Israel were attacked — not just by Iraq, but by probably five or six other Arab countries, no help could possibly arrive in time if the enemy were poised, not beyond the Jordan, but on the outskirts of Jerusalem and within a few miles of Tel Aviv.

Our country has saved both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia from total destruction and from becoming provinces of Iraq . It is therefore disappointing that the President and the Secretary of State decided to lean, not on the Arabs but on Israel in order to bring about peace in the Middle East. One could have hoped for some gratitude at least from those two countries. Secretary Baker, as a first step in his peace mission, could have asked the Arabs to terminate their state of belligerency against Israel, to end their commercial boycott against Israel that has been in effect for over 40 years (long before Israel came into the administration of the disputed territories), and to renounce the slanderous equation that "Zionism is racism". But there is no leaning on the Arabs who, just barely having escaped their annihilation, are now as insolent and as arrogant as before. By leaning on Israel and by the constant repetition of the shopworn mantra of "land for peace", the President and the Secretary of State are endangering the only democracy in that wide area of the world and are instead giving comfort to the tyrannical Arab regimes, who are no friends of ours. The pressure is being put in the wrong place and it is applied in the wrong direction.

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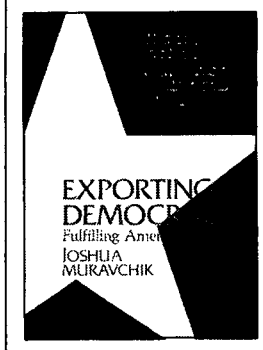

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

• May passes but not PC, that set of ideological mysteries that tyrannize some of America's best campuses, which is to say most expensive, not most intellectual. But *The American Spectator*'s public-spirited project, Amnesty in Academia, continues to gather incriminating evidence of human rights violations committed against red-blooded American students and that noble remnant among the professoriate still capable of delighting in the play of the mind and the acquisition of knowledge. Their calls are pouring into our 800 number (1-800-783-6707) for the victimized, as we prepare our special back-to-school issue for later this year and line up human rights lawyers and negotiators to ensure the blessings of liberty on campus. Stay on the alert, and call us if you are abused for your ideas or normal bodily functions.

• In Atlanta, Georgia, 3,000 lesbians herded together for the first National Lesbian Conference, the largest concentration of such fantasticos since the last Democratic National Convention. Men were banned from the premises, though the ban's enforcement was, shall we say, ticklish. Many of the nulliparous gals could have passed for Chicago Bears, and the great hall in which they met soon reeked with locker room pungencies as the gals swayed and sweated to the rhythmic bellowings of their leather-lunged haranguers. Perfumes and even deodorants had been proscribed, lest their sweet odors make participants ill—some are quite active in the anti-environmental scents movement. Food, too, was barred, out of concern for the conflict that might ensue among animal-rights advocates, vegetarians, fruitarians, meat eaters, and cannibals. After four days of tirades and workshops there were no reported casualties, though there were not a lot of laughs either. All in all, it was a grim affair, though not as grim as the month's May Day celebrations in Moscow. Lesbians, at least, have a future.

• At Stanford University, neither President Donald Kennedy nor any of his henchmen has been indicted or fled the country, but the Feds are moving in. Government auditors have charged that Stanford has bilked the government of hundreds of millions of dollars, and are demanding restitution. The Kennedy regime has agreed to repayment and on May 10, in a move that has fooled no one, fired Mr. Stuart Reges, the computer lecturer who boasted to federal officials of his use of illegal drugs. Scapegoating will get you nowhere, Generalissimo Kennedy. In still more news from the daft realms of higher education, Western Illinois University's $36,000-a-year associate professor of leisure is fighting for his job, that he might continue to illumine students with such spellbinding courses as "Philosophy of Leisure" and "Concepts of Leisure." WIU's illustrious faculty committee (containing two professors who have read *Moby Dick* in its entirety, one who has taken *two* Berlitz courses in Mexican, another who can locate Paris, France, on a map, even after three glasses of *vin ordinaire*, and the university's Nintendo champion) voted 3-2 to fire Mr. George Harker, 47, because of alleged indolence, dereliction of duty, and an immoderate interest in nude beaches. But Mr. Harker, a self-professed opponent of the "work ethic" who believes he is being victimized by the McCarthyism of "workaholics," has vowed to defend himself at a June 20 Board of Governors meeting—assuming that the meeting does not begin too early or collide with Mr. Harker's ample luncheon hour. At San Francisco State University, a spokeswoman admitted that officials remain "extremely concerned" about the furtive presence on campus of an unidentified "toe-licker," who on several occasions last fall and this spring has secreted himself in dormitories and licked the toes of sleeping coeds. Many coeds have armed themselves with baseball bats and bottles, and doubtless some do not turn down the sheets without slipping condoms onto each toe. Still, things are tense.

• Mr. William Webster retired as director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and on May 14 President Bush nominated Robert Gates, his deputy national security adviser, to replace Mr. Webster. On May 15 President François Mitterrand named a cute little number, Mrs. Edith Cresson, to replace Mr. Michel Rocard as France's prime minister. Mrs. Cresson has known President Mitterrand since the 1960s, but has absolutely never served as his mistress, contrary to the convictions of the vast majority of French women. Mr. Nolan Ryan, 44, pitched his seventh no-hitter, three more than the next most prolific producer of no-hitters, Mr. Sandy Koufax. The Cincinnati Reds' Mr. Ron Dibble was suspended for four games for throwing a baseball into the center-field stands during a bout of free-floating anxiety. Mr. Dibble hit a 27-year-old elementary school teacher on the elbow. In San Bernardino, California, Mr. Ronnie Newt, the lead singer of the rap group Newtrons, was fatally shot while trying to knock off a store owned by Mr. Jong Soo Yoo, 43, another Korean businessman who is also an excellent shot.

• Thousands of the citizens of Atlanta, Georgia, have been duped into believing that within the lush sauce and randomly configured noodles of a billboard depicting a forkful of spaghetti they see a vision of Jesus Christ. There are thirty-five such billboards supposedly paid for by a restaurant chain specializing in Italian foods; but one can never rule out that they might be another attempt by the Vatican to hornswoggle Atlantans into the Roman Church, and apparently they are having a powerful effect on the unwary. Even Miss Joyce Simpson, a 41-year-old fashion designer and body builder, was not immune to the Papist trickery. Whilst passing one billboard, she believes that she heard the Holy Spirit say "Look up." As she now puts it, "I looked up, and as soon as I looked up I simply lost my breath. . . . I saw the Michelangelo version of Christ. I saw the crown of thorns. I saw the deep-set eyes. I saw the nose, the mustache [the mustache?]. I saw the total vision of Christ." Where is the Klan when it is needed?

• Strike the Gold won the Kentucky Derby. The Preakness went to Hansel. The Dutch national team won this year's Blackawaton International Worm Charming Championships in London, England, after three teams were cited for illegally molesting their worms. In scenic Riverhead, New York, the Rev. John R. Gargano, 67, of the Eternal Truth Tabernacle in Central Islip, has been charged with sexually abusing four youths while posing as the angel Gabriel. On May 11, sportsman Mr. William Kennedy Smith surrendered to West Palm Beach police, who charged him with committing battery and rape during a nocturnal hunt last Good Friday. Mr. Smith is the nephew of Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, who allegedly helped equip his nephew for the expedition over several rounds of strong drink at a nearby nightclub. In Albany, New York, a state senator is seeking to proscribe non-alcoholic beer out of fear that it prepares the young to drink the real stuff. The senator is a Republican! Pope John Paul II delivered up an encyclical so favorable to the free market as to suggest that he who believes in the Blessed Trinity now believes in the Invisible Hand.

• The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reported that over the winter there was a record loss of whooping cranes. Some experts attribute the loss to increased stress in the bird's Texas wintering

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grounds, others to an excellent new recipe for whooping crane gumbo. In Boys Town, Nebraska, Miss Sarah Williamson, 16, became the first girl ever elected mayor. In Los Angeles, California, Mr. Daniel Ramos, 18, the graffitist who was convicted last winter for scrawling "Chaka" as many as 10,000 times throughout California, was released from the hoosegow only to be picked up minutes later on suspicion of scrawling his interesting word in an elevator as he vacated the courthouse. One of the country's most venerable anti-Communists, Mr. George Speri Sperti, died at the age of 91. At the behest of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cincinnati, Mr. Sperti established the Institutum Divi Thomae in 1935 as a graduate school dedicated to keeping pace with the Soviets in science. There Mr. Sperti invented Preparation H, one more of the many benefits of the Cold War.

—RET

CORRESPONDENCE

Tulane Totalitarians

Tom Bethell's report on "Tulane and the Big Government Campus" (*TAS*, May 1991) correctly captured the totalitarian mindset of Tulane's administration. It goes beyond race and gender. In an April 23, 1991, directive, the newly appointed academic vice president and provost demands of every faculty member a report on "business and financial activities outside Tulane University in which you have participated during the 1990-91 academic year." Supposedly Big Brother wants this information to ferret out conflicts of interest; a more likely use is the building of dossiers against politically incorrect faculty. Perhaps I should send my subscription renewal in cash under an assumed name.

Through it all, the Tulane administration may outdo the Stanfords and Dukes on one score: it may unite a politically diverse faculty in purging the institution of the nonsense which endangers its educational mission.

—Gerard E. Watzke
Associate Professor
A. B. Freeman School of Business
Tulane University
New Orleans, Louisiana

Rootin' Teuton

Of all the conservative publications to which I subscribe (*National Review*, *Chronicles*, *Conservative Review*, and *Commentary*), only *TAS* consistently contains articles which take little jabs and digs at Germany and the Germans. I started to notice this more than a year ago with the Gold-Tyrrell piece asking for a boycott of German goods, a cretinous idea if there ever was one. And since that time each issue has had something if not in the same vein not too dissimilar. For example, the April 1991 issue in "Current Wisdom" scoffs at John Lukacs's observation that the German people by and large like Americans and have a more realistic political judgment than that of the people in Eastern Europe. Well, this just may be true. And Michael Ledeen thinks the Germans have been gulled into giving money to Gorbachev. The correct word is blackmailed.

—Beverly C. Meyer
Walnut Creek, California

Hair

The items in "Current Wisdom" are surely offered for our entertainment, and for this reason the material from *Good Times* (May 1991) about the opening of a clinic for trichotillomania in Santa Cruz doesn't belong.

Trichotillomania is one manifestation of "Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder," an organic brain disfunction (now often medically treatable) that can devastate the lives of its victims, who must put many hours and much energy each day into compulsive rituals of cleaning, hair pulling, and checking, or into obsessive mental loops of embarrassing or frightening imaginings. Those with trichotillomania may be unable to stop themselves from removing every hair on their body.

Interested readers may find out more information on trichotillomania in *The Boy Who Couldn't Stop Washing: The Experience and Treatment of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder* by Judith Rapoport, M. D.

—Jonathan Mills
Newtonville, Massachusetts

The Hussein Factor

Terry Eastland's piece, "The Power Executive" (*TAS*, May 1991), is superbly written and his observations eminently fair. However, one major element is notably missing from his analysis, namely Saddam Hussein's utter foolishness. At any number of junctures in the unfolding scenario one would have expected the Iraqi ruler to speak or act in such a way as to send ambiguous signals to those arrayed against him. The least bit of subtlety, the least bit of indication that he was willing to move or negotiate his position would have been enough to throw off what in retrospect seems an almost choreographed series of decisions and events on the part of President Bush and the coalition forces. In other words, Hussein's lack of Machiavellian cunning largely contributed to the success of the operation by ensuring the cohesiveness and resolve of the U.S. and its allies. Taking nothing from the President's determined posture, the emergence of the United States out from the legacy of Vietnam owes something of a debt to this ruthless and stupid dictator.

—Adrian R. Valentino
Fort Collins, Colorado

Partisan Bickering

So now it's British homosexual traitors who provided disinformation regarding the World War II exploits of Draza Mihailovich and his Chetnik forces, causing the Allies to tilt to Tito during the war (review of *The Web of Disinformation*, by David Martin, and *The Rape of Serbia*, by Michael Lees, by Aram Bakshian, Jr., *TAS*, May 1991). No one could accuse the German High Command of harboring Communist dupes. They commissioned a contemporary history written by General Wisshaupt which documented that as early as November 1941, Mihailovich offered "to fight with his bands together with the German troops against the Communists." While the Nazis rejected this offer, their Italian allies who controlled western Yugoslavia often accepted collaboration with Chetnik forces—to such an extent that Hitler's military chief-of-staff, Alfred Jodl, testified at Nuremberg of the Chetniks, "They were under Italian command. Because of this there was always a big row between us and the Italians."

In time of war the most important objective is to win, often necessitating awkward alliances—witness the recent cozying up to Syria's Assad during the Gulf War. The plain fact was and is that during the critical period near the end of 1942 when the Allies shifted their support to Tito, it was the Partisans, not the Chetniks, who were causing the most problems for the Axis occupiers.

—John Sarich
Sacramento, California

Political Correction

The American Spectator has always been very fair in its reporting about the so-called "Arab-Israeli conflict."

In reading "The Mission Thing," by Gene Gibbons in the May 1991 issue of *TAS*, I was therefore surprised to read a reference to " . . . the incident of November 8 at Jerusalem's Temple Mount, when Israeli security forces killed more than a dozen unarmed Palestinian protesters . . ."

The "unarmed protesters" were part of a raging mob of 4,000 Moslem Arabs

(continued on page 40)

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EDITORIALS

THE BORKING OF CAROL IANNONE

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Do you know what the Modern Language Association (MLA) is? It is an association of university scholars that patrols standards of scholarship in Academe, particularly in comparative literature. It is one of the reasons that American universities are so intellectually uninteresting. And it is a practitioner of the kind of intolerance and bigotry that now threatens higher learning. It is another of the Ku Klux Klans that ride across college campuses enforcing right thinking, thinking that is PC or "politically correct."

The Knights of the MLA are now plighting their sacred honor to knocking off one Carol Iannone, a literary critic who disagrees with them. She is particularly abhorrent to the Knights because she holds an adjunct teaching position at the Gallatin Division of New York University, from which she poisons young minds by spreading a love of good literature. But now the Knights think they have her. Lynne Cheney, the President's immensely capable chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), has nominated her to a position on the Endowment's 26-member council, which meets quarterly to advise on NEH grants. The Knights and other enforcers of PC could not drive Miss Iannone off campus for her teaching, so they will use the occasion of her government appointment to blacken her reputation and destroy her career.

This is called Borking a person. If the forces of PC cannot nail an independent-minded conservative scholar while he is on campus, wait until he is appointed to government office to slander him, and then bring in political pressure to oust him from professional life. In fact one of the leading players in the lynch mob that nailed Judge Robert Bork—People for the American Way—has joined in the hate campaign against Miss Iannone. In her writing, Miss Iannone has derided the politicization of literature. She sees feminist ideology as an offense against art and opposes racial or ideological judgments of literature. Thus the hate campaign contends with neither logic nor evidence that she is hostile to women and to minorities—two categories that obviously include her. The Knights of the MLA have actually supported the charge that Miss Iannone's work is comparable to that of such Nazi tools as the late Paul de Man.

Finally they scorn her for not having her work published in any of their learned journals or read at their learned national conventions. At last year's MLA convention you could have slept soundly or heard papers read on such topics as "The Detective as Pervert," "The Polygenesis of Long Vowels in North Italian Dialects: An Autosegmental Analysis," "The Lesbian Phallus: Or, Does Heterosexuality Exist?" and "Self-Consuming Fictions: The Dialectics of Cannibalism in Recent Caribbean Narratives." And if one were to bring his personal physician, "Telling It Slant: Personal Narrative and the Reality of Leprosy" or "Assume the Position: Pluralist Ideology and Gynocriticism."

Of course, Miss Iannone is to be congratulated for not in any way conforming to the esotery of these nitwits. They and other enforcers of noxious orthodoxies have been the bane of American intellectual life since the 1960s, making it one of the least vibrant and diverse intellectual cultures in the world. Eastern Europe under Stalinists was more adventuresome. And the bigotry and intolerance of the American intellectual are not confined to the left. The right has its fraternal organizations of second-rate minds, too.

For weeks now Patrick Buchanan has been sputtering in defense of a minor clique of conservative intellectuals (self-styled paleoconservatives) whose complaint is that they are rarely considered for foundation grants or the kind of government nomination granted Miss Iannone. Buchanan's eggheads are as intolerant as the Knights of the MLA and as foolish—the Knights' bizarre enthusiasms bespeak infantile revolution, the Buchananites' bespeak infantile reaction. Both groups champion the perverse. They ignore simple competence. They drive diversity from their presence. Neither would have the humanities accessible to the average taxpayer. To them an idea has to be bizarre to be relished. That is why both must oppose Miss Iannone's appointment. The Knights of the MLA define themselves by hating what is normal about Western culture; their conservative equivalents do the same, but they exist only on the outer fringes of the right. □

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

MOUTHWASH MADNESS

Spring is with us! But so are The Mournful—The Ever Mournful. No sooner are we visited by the first balmy gusts from the season of amour than word leaks from the National Cancer Institute that mouthwash increases the risk of throat and mouth cancer. What will young lovers do without mouthwash? Think of the stress that will afflict them before canoodling if they have to worry about the carcinogenic qualities of their breath-sweetener of choice. Surely, this stress cannot be salubrious.

Actually, the National Cancer Institute admits that it has not "firmly established" an increased risk of cancer attendant with mouthwash. What is more, it acknowledges that "it is premature to make recommendations about using mouthwash." Yet the damage has been done. Foul breath will impede young love, for our country abounds with the hypochondriacs, the pessimists, and the mournful. Then too, you can be sure that mouthwash moguls all around the republic are going to be contacting their lawyers. Research staffs are doubtless already at work developing mouthwash that is politically correct and—who knows?—perhaps respectful of the rights of bacteria and halitosis.

Like all American industrialists, the Mouthwash Moguls would rather not find themselves targeted by reforming zealots. There are increasing numbers of these glassy-eyed idealists, all devoted to stirring up controversy where once there was only, well, mouthwash, or food sweetener or . . . Alar. Remember Alar? That chemical rendered apples redder and more beauteous to the eye until February 26, 1989, when Mr. Ed Bradley described it on "Sixty Minutes" as the "most potent cancer-causing agent in our food supply." Kaboom. The apple industry went belly up and Alar went the way of cyclamates—though Alar was shown to be harmless.

American industry lives in fear of the

AMNESTY IN ACADEMIA

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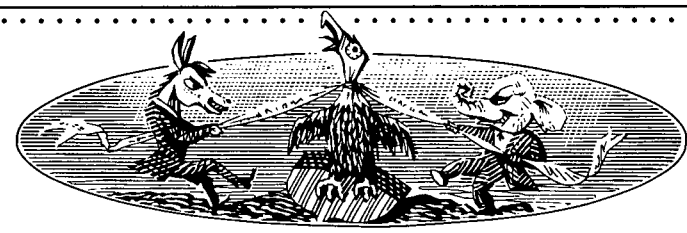
zealots and the many trial lawyers who prosper from the zealots' industry. Both groups make it difficult not only to market products but also to improve them. Think of the howls that have attended the tobacco industry's attempts to market low-nicotine cigarettes. This flap too began on CBS. "There are new accusations that tobacco companies are misleading the public about the dangers of smoking by implying that they've come up with safer cigarettes," Dan Rather declaimed in introducing an April 9 "Evening News" report on protests against Philip Morris's new line of low-nicotine cigarettes.

Actually, the tobacco industry has not claimed that low-nicotine cigarettes are safer than standard cigarettes—only that they are lower in nicotine, which means they are less likely to be addictive. That would be all to the good, but anti-tobacco groups want to keep these cigarettes off the market on the illogical grounds that a cigarette that is less addictive will be smoked more frequently. But the zealots' influence could prove even more pernicious. In researching a less addictive, lower-tar cigarette, tobacco researchers might be producing data that reveal the standard cigarette to be hazardous. The zealots could sue for access to such research data and use them against the companies. In journalism, we call this a chilling effect; it retards industry, and could retard research into a safer cigarette.

It is ironic that, even as American longevity increases, the number of products marked for extinction by the zealots also increases. Can you imagine twenty years ago greeting low-nicotine or low-tar cigarettes with protests? Can you imagine researchers apprehensive about improving their products for fear that, in so doing, they would be encouraging trial lawyers to sue them for their earlier products?

And can you imagine industry being afraid to advertise new products for fear of prosecution? A demented rock musician can sing forth any twisted lyric that comes to mind with the full force of the First Amendment on his side. Yet a company with a new product to boom has to fear endless litigation if some crank complains. In fact, there is a movement afoot today, here and in Europe, to ban from media advertisements for a whole range of products, from pharmaceuticals to booze and tobacco, and now perhaps mouthwash. The consequence of this censorship will be not a healthier society but a more boring one. □

CAPITOL IDEAS



WATERING THE CHIPS

by Tom Bethell

Stanford, California

Thomas Graff is a senior attorney with the Environmental Defense Fund and a graduate of Harvard Law School, with offices in Oakland right next to Berkeley. On his desk are piles of legal briefs; on his shelves Paul Ehrlich's *End of Affluence* and E. F. Shumaker's *Small Is Beautiful*, along with a lot of intimidating tomes on environmental law—no doubt, you are probably thinking, Graff is one of those unacknowledged oligarchs whose word will be law tomorrow and who can stop economic development whenever he feels like it by pronouncing some new species endangered.

He doesn't quite fit the stereotype. He does want to protect the environment, particularly California's, which is where he has lived for twenty years. When he arrived in the state in 1971 he was "a New Deal liberal if there ever was one," he told me. In 1974 he worked on Gov. Jerry Brown's transition team. Recently he has devoted much time to the water problem in California. And the approach he is taking is a sensible one. He is promoting market solutions to environmental problems.

No doubt you heard about the drought. It did rain in March, but as a matter of course there is little or no rain, year after year, between April and November. This means, incidentally, that most of California, including the coast, must have been pretty much uninhabitable before the arrival of civilization; that is, before aqueducts and reservoirs could be built. In the early nineteenth century San Francisco was barren hills and sand dunes. Los Angeles was desert. And that's what they still would be today if we had had the form of government common in Third World countries (and blithely supported by the foreign aid bureaucracies).

The story of California water can get very complicated. This is the simplified version. In the course of a year the state receives a lot of rain and snow—about 193 million acre feet. (An acre foot is about 330,000 gallons.) Most of this (121 million acre feet) evaporates; 30 million more acre feet run into the ocean. Of the remainder, 30 million acre feet are diverted into the state's 13,000 reservoirs and many aqueducts. About 80 percent (24 million acre feet) of the diverted water—the "developed supply," so called—goes to agriculture. A mere 6 million acre feet is used for everything else: industry, cities, sprinkling on lawns, showers, toilets, washing machines, swimming pools, and so on.

Agriculture gets the lion's share—and yet contributes surprisingly little to the state's gross product: a mere 2.5 percent. So it's easy to see that there is a serious distortion. The water is quite plentiful, but it is distributed irrationally. Local governments impose rationing schemes on Bay Area residents. In Riverside County, there's a moratorium on water connections to new houses. In Silicon Valley, the director of the Santa Clara Manufacturing Group says: "Facilities that were in the planning stage have been put on hold or curtailed because of the lack of available water." It takes a lot of water to turn silicon into microchips. Meanwhile, millions of gallons are poured onto arid fields to grow rice, alfalfa (sold as hay), and cotton. Crops are then sold at prices propped up by Agriculture Department subsidies.

Who owns the water, that it should be used so strangely?

"The state of California owns the water," Graff told me. Some of it is also effectively owned by the federal government. The dams and aqueducts were built by government agencies.

Let's say I'm a farmer and I want water for my fields. What do I do?

"You go to the State Water Resources Control Board and say, 'Please give me a permit to divert water from stream X,' " Graff said. "If there is unappropriated water left on the stream, the law says you get it." The system works in a "first-in-time, first-in-right" manner. Farmers who applied first have priority over later applicants. Except in northern coastal areas, virtually all the water is now allocated.

But suppose I'm lucky and I get a permit. Do I pay for the water?

"No, no, it's free," Graff said. "Water in western states is free." He laughed. "Which of course makes sense, because it's so scarce." Farmers do pay for the structures that they might need to divert the water, or to use it or store it, he added. "But the actual water is given away by the state."

I now have a right to use the water—and my permit specifies how I must use it. But my right depends on my exercising it. If at some point I stop doing so, I lose it. I have to go back to the end of the line if I want to divert water my way again. And then I probably won't get any. This is called the "use it or lose it" system.

"Therefore," Graff added, "your incentive is to keep using it. Whether you need it or not." Once the state has given you the permit, he said, "the last thing you want to do is let them know that you won't be using the water anymore."

Now I am in business as a rice farmer, with cheap water and government subsidies that bring the price up to $10.70 for 100 pounds of rice. Maybe I just flood the land and grow nothing—as a result getting $260 per idle acre from the Feds. One day state officials show up at my door and offer me good money if they can divert my water to the cities. Would I sign on the dotted line? When Al Driver, who grows rice on a 2,400-acre farm north of Sacramento, was asked this question a few months ago he said: "None of us want to be knot-headed about it, but we don't care for it and we're not going to do it." They worry that once they give up the water, they won't be able to get it back again.

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent and a media fellow at the Hoover Institution.*

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Rice growers actually use more water than all the households of Los Angeles and San Francisco combined.

So what does all this have to do with Tom Graff's concerns about the environment? With the state's population growing rapidly (by 6 million in the 1980s), and most of the water being poured into the ground for farming, the agencies that manage the water (primarily the State Department of Water Resources and the Federal Bureau of Reclamation) have a burning desire to build more dams and canals. These will capture more water and fatten up their budgets nicely. But for fifteen years now they have been prevented from doing so, primarily by environmentalists.

Graff would like to keep it that way. But he realizes that the cities must have water. He also realizes that they don't use much water compared to the amount wasted on low-valued crops. Some environmentalists, he admits, do want to use the water shortage to shut off economic growth once and for all. He wants to use it to change the system.

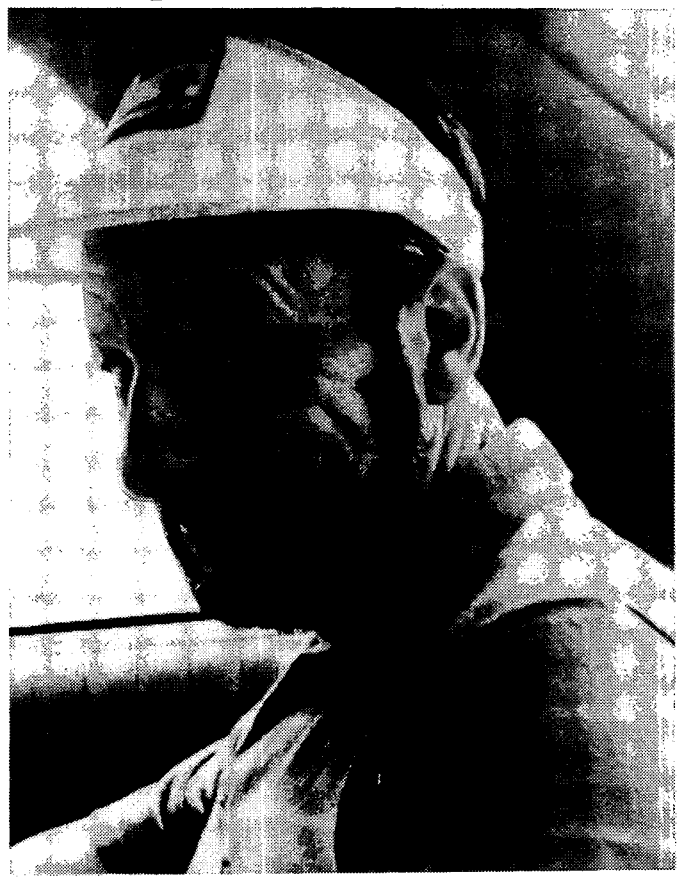
In a way, I suspect, environmentalists are very conservative people. They want the rivers and streams to go on flowing into the sea and into the lakes pretty much the way they did before man built aqueducts. One of the things Graff is concerned about is the reduced flow of fresh water from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers into the San Francisco Bay. The bay, and the delta inland from it, are becoming saltier as a result. This is satisfactory for some kinds of fish but unsatisfactory for others (salmon and striped bass, for example). Another concern is Mono Lake, home to flies and brine shrimp, on the eastern side of the Sierras. Streams that used to flow into this lonely lake have been diverted into the Los Angeles Aqueduct, and thence 225 miles south into the wicked city itself. The level of the lake has dropped by twenty-five feet, its area has shrunk to sixty square miles from eighty. This is said to be perilous for gulls and migratory grebes.

I don't know whether these are real problems or not. It may be that environmentalists worry needlessly about the frailty of ecosystems, and try unnecessarily to keep variables constant. Or perhaps the problems are real. The point is that by halting the construction of new projects, the environmentalists have put a great strain on the existing way of distributing water in the state. Therefore, the system will have to change—as it should.

Change how? The solution preferred by Graff and the Environmental Defense Fund is to give the farmers clear title to the water and allow them to do what they like with it; in particular, allow them to sell it to cities for whatever price they can get. As the Metropolitan Water District (Southern California) recently sold water for $230 per acre foot, and farmers have been delivered water for $5, this would be profitable for farmers. Zach Willey, the EDF economist who first introduced Graff to these market ideas, calls this a "win-win" solution. The farmers are better off because their water is put to a higher valued use and they capture that higher return; the cities are better off because, when they can buy water from the farmers, they are assured of ample supplies. And the environmentalists are better off because the system will deliver water where it's wanted without having to build new projects.

Farmers, environmentalists, and cities are said to be the three main contenders for California water. But as "public choice" economics tells us, there is a fourth group, consisting of those employed by the relevant government agencies. They would clearly be losers. If the water can be shunted around the state without their permission—and there are enough culverts and aqueducts to channel the water wherever it's needed—they would lose power. Their budgets no doubt would suffer too.

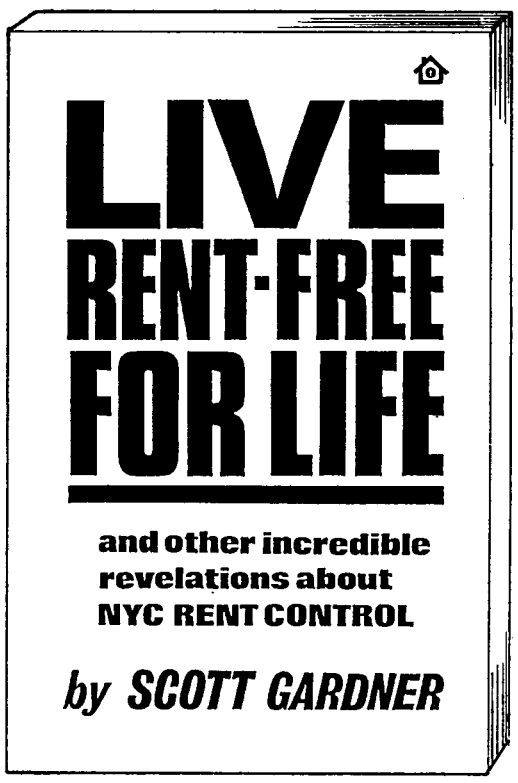
Why are the bookstores so afraid of my harmless little book?



O.K. So "Live Rent-Free For Life" is the first book that dares to poke fun at rent control; one of liberalism's most sacred cows. And I admit I violated a sacrosanct taboo when I called rent control one of this nation's dumbest laws. But I now realize that the people behind this ingenious rip-off are not quite as idiotic as I originally thought they were.

American taxpayers now pay billions of dollars a year to keep in force a law that underneath its "humanitarian" pretense of helping the poor, is nothing more than a blatant scam that benefits the privileged few at the expense of nearly everyone else. You have to be pretty damned clever to put a fraud like that over on so many people for such a long time.

Maybe all that has something to do with the fact that although bookstores all over the country receive hundreds of requests for "Live Rent-Free" every week, for some strange reason, none seem to carry this book in stock.



I believe if more people read this book and learned about rent control's scandalous con game, this outrageous law might eventually be repealed. Sure, a lot of rich, rent-controlled tenants, pandering politicians, and buffoon bureaucrats would be greatly vexed. But just think what YOUR rent controlled city could do with a couple of extra billion each year.

I would like to ask every American interested in improving this nation's future to be more than a Spectator. DO NOT to order this book by mail. Why pay $2.00 extra for shipping when you have a right to buy it at your local bookstore. Ask them--no demand that they order "Live Rent-Free For Life." Don't let them tell you it isn't in print or out of stock. Your retailer can order it directly from Baker & Taylor, the nation's largest distributor. (ISBN 0-9614112-2-8)

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"Apart from the fact that bureaucrats don't like it," Graff added, "even among the interest groups it's very hard to persuade some environmentalists that we're going to have to pay for these things." (He means: Some think they can use their political clout to get everything they want without compromise.)

He pointed out a problem I hadn't thought of. If the farmers are given the water, so that they *can* sell it for a profit to the highest bidders, they cease being farmers and become water entrepreneurs. They might do quite well out of it, but the farming communities would suffer. The California Farm Bureau, normally a supporter of markets, is therefore opposed to the proposed changes.

Richard Howitt, a professor of agricultural economics at U.C. Davis, said he thought this could be resolved without too much hardship. "We're only talking about transferring 8 to 10 percent [of the farmers' water]," he said. "That would be sufficient to bring the system into balance with all the urban growth." Transfers would be needed only in the dry years—say two out of five. In Colorado and Arizona, by contrast, towns bought 100 percent of the water rights in some cases, leaving valleys parched, sugar beet plants closed down, the surrounding communities out of business.

Of water in California, Howitt said: "As its scarcity increased, and the economy using it shifted, the advantage of markets suddenly became clear." Land in the west started off being common property, he added, then there were rules regulating its allocation; finally, one day someone said: "Why don't we buy it and sell it as we do elsewhere?" Agriculture in the state used to be proportionately far more important than it is today, and the water used to be cheap enough that farms were the best place to put it. "Now," Howitt said, "perhaps we're better off making microchips out of it."

A big problem at the moment is that farmers regard their existing subsidies and benefits as preferable to the vagaries of change. Plainly, many of them believe that the plan is to *take* the water from them—that is how the issue is frequently framed in the press—when the idea is to give them property rights in the water. As full owners, the farmers then can sell it, or lose a good financial opportunity by failing to do so.

Not much is likely to change as long as the farmers receive subsidies both for their water and their crops. Rep. George Miller of California, chairman of the House Interior Committee since the resignation of Rep. Mo Udall, is supporting a bill by Rep. Sam Gejdenson of Connecticut that would force farmers to choose between their subsidies: water or crops, but they can't have both. Tom Graff said there were legislative difficulties because two autonomous committees are involved—Agriculture and Interior. But the bill "could pass the House this year." In fact "it's likely," he said. Maybe (I began to ruminate) he really is one of those people whose word is law within months . . .

How did he feel about free market solutions to other environmental problems? The Environmental Defense Fund looks at these ideas case by case. "We were active in promoting the acid-rain tradeable emissions idea," he said. "Property rights in African elephants? It's fair to say that we have not endorsed that." Partly it's a matter of gauging public opinion. Giving the national parks to environmental groups? "We have not endorsed that," he said. True, such ideas have been supported by the free-market Political Economy Research Center in Montana. "We think of them sometimes as ivory-tower," Graff said. "Correct in theory, but the fact is the public is not going to stand for Yellowstone being turned over to anyone else, be it Disney or Nature Conservancy. Let's talk about things that are in the realm of possibility." Like watering the chips. □

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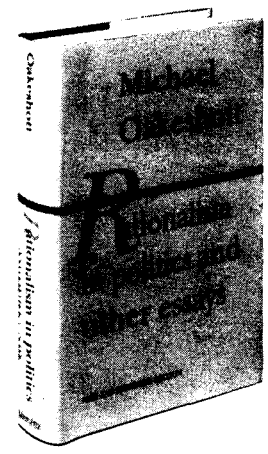
By Michael Oakeshott
Foreword by Timothy Fuller



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David Frum

THE CONSERVATIVE BULLY BOY

Pat Buchanan's critique of "neoconservatism," whatever he understands it to mean, rests on bitterness, inconsistency, and a kooky obsession with ethnicity and culture. Why doesn't he pick on somebody his own size—say, the Heritage Foundation or the *Wall Street Journal*'s editorial page?

Like the Lithuanian *bubbies* who haunt the stories of Philip Roth, embarrassing the young folks with Yiddish and garlic when they bring their gentile friends home, Patrick Buchanan is everything that couth conservatives want to escape. But the more you want *bubbie* to go away, the more determinedly she hangs around. Open the local tabloid and there is Buchanan defending a Nazi war criminal. Turn on the TV and there he is again, sputtering and going red in the face about the threat of colored immigration. Sort through the mail and there's his newsletter, bringing you the straight dope on how Communism inspired the civil rights movement.

Of late, though, Buchanan's outbursts have been directed at an unusual target: conservatives whose conservatism differs from his own. Despite his vast material success, it seems, Buchanan is a man with a festering grievance: smart people, on the right as much as on the left, don't respect him. And, as readers of Buchanan's tough-guy memoir *Right from the Beginning* will recall, Buchanan knows only one thing to do with people who don't respect him: stomp them.

So in two May columns, Buchanan invited the pantywaists, bookworms, and wiseacres in the conservative movement to step outside. "Before true conservatives can ever take back the country," he snarled in the first of the columns, "they are first going to have to take back their movement." From whom? He answered that question a week later in a second column: from the "neoconservatives . . . the ex-liberals, socialists, and Trotskyists who signed on in the name of anti-communism and now control our foundations and set the limits of permissible dissent."

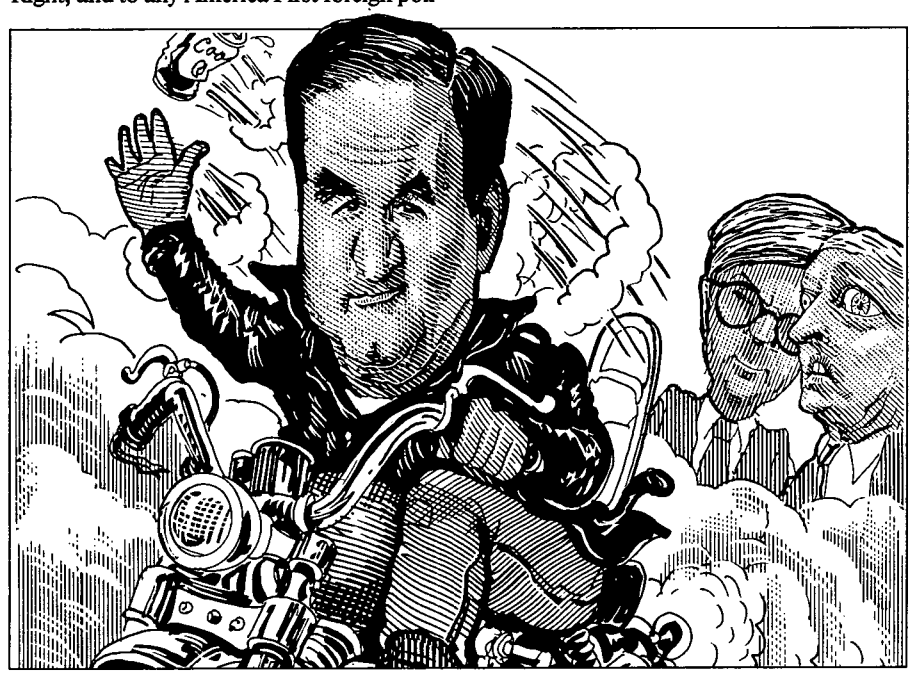
The first column cited at length a book chapter by Paul Gottfried of Elizabethtown College, which appeared in the March issue of a newsletter edited by Murray Rothbard and Llewellyn Rockwell of the Ludwig von Mises Institute. Buchanan darkly observed "the capture of the four big conservative foundations by neo-con staffers who are steering $30 million a year to front groups, magazines, scholars and policy institutions who toe their party line." The magazine you are holding in your hand, according to Gottfried, gets a princely $450,000 a year from these foundations. [*Editor's note*: The actual figure is about half that amount.]

The party line these mysteriously powerful people enforce is subverting what Buchanan understands as true conservatism:

> Ex-Great Society liberals, almost all of them, they support the welfare state and Big Government. They are pro–civil rights and affirmative action, though anti-quota. They are pro–foreign aid, especially for Israel. They favor higher immigration quotas; and some demand open borders.
>
> Many are viscerally hostile to the Old Right, and to any America First foreign policy. They want to use America's wealth to promote "global democracy" abroad and impose "democratic values" in our public schools.
>
> While they supported Reagan against Carter, their heroes are Woodrow Wilson and FDR, globalists and architects of the mammoth modern state. Though most neo-cons were opposed to America's war in Vietnam, they were wildly pro-war against Iraq—even in August.

Buchanan endorses the withering opinion of these conservatives held by Tom Fleming, editor of the Rockford Institute's *Chronicles* magazine: "They have a lock on all money and the institutions created by the right; they have established a cozy relationship with the leftist establishment media who recognize them for what they are, well-groomed lap dogs who bark but never bite."

In the second column, Buchanan lamented that Reagan-era conservativism had ended in failure. "Conservatives today cheer a regime that spends a record 25 percent of the GNP, that is using our wealth to erect a Wilsonian New World Order, that has given us two wars, a tax increase and a dramatic increase in state power." He blamed this dismal situation not on a free-spending Congress, nor on a namby-pamby President, but on the true right's fatal dalliance with neoconservatism.



The postwar Old Right came together to roll back the New Deal, to dismantle the welfare-warfare state of FDR. Today's new "conservatism," by whatever fancy name it is called, is devoted to Big Government, minority rights and globalism.

With grim satisfaction Buchanan concluded, "The new battle for the American right has been joined."

It's been opened, at least. It can't be fully joined until there's a little more candor about who's on which side and what the fight's about.

Buchanan is being uncandid, first, because the litmus tests he has borrowed from Gottfried, Rothbard, and *Chronicles* to distinguish good, true conservatives from bad neoconservatives are not very useful. Is Richard Nixon—who considered Woodrow Wilson the greatest of twentieth-century Presidents—now a neoconservative? Is Jack Kemp—pro-Israel, pro-globalism, pro-immigration, pro–civil rights—another? Could it possibly be that Ronald Reagan—himself pro-Israel, pro-globalism, pro-immigration, pro–civil rights, and, on top of everything else, pro-FDR—is a third?

And what is this anti-neoconservative position that Buchanan is summoning his admirers to? What decent person is *against* "civil rights"? Who wouldn't be "viscerally hostile" to a capital A, capital F "America First" policy—a policy that as late as the dangerous summer and fall of 1941 denied that a Nazi-dominated Europe from Moscow to Madrid was anything the United States ought to be bothered by?

There is in fact nothing particularly "neoconservative" about the pro-inter-

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nationalism, pro-immigration, pro-democracy ideological position Buchanan has set himself against. You'll find it espoused at the Heritage Foundation and on the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*, in the University of Chicago faculty lounge and—yes, Mr. Rockwell—in the pages of Ludwig von Mises. But just as it's the little guy in glasses, not the ugly hulk in the corner, that the barroom bully prefers to pick on, so Buchanan nods politely to conservatism's 800-pound gorillas as he sidles daintily around them to knock poor old Norman Podhoretz's hat onto the floor and ask him whether he cares to make something out of it. Buchanan chooses his targets in, shall we say, a remarkably *prudent* way.

Buchanan is uncandid, second, because so many of the anti-neoconservative grievances he airs are pure flimflam. Buchanan's pals at Rockford, for instance, never tire of repeating the legend that their quarrel with people they label "neoconservatives" erupted when Irving Kristol, whom they consider the Gavrilo Princip of the conflict, persuaded President-elect Reagan not to nominate the historian M. E. Bradford to the chairmanship of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The job was given to Kristol's friend William Bennett instead.

The legend is false. By his own admission, Edwin Feulner of Heritage (who never in his life had a good word to say for the Great Society) was much more instrumental than Kristol in kiboshing the Bradford appointment—and for the very good reason that Bradford, although a fine mind and a graceful writer, had published essays that could reasonably be understood by an unfriendly reader to liken Abraham Lincoln to Hitler. It's expecting rather a lot to ask a newly elected President to wreck his political honeymoon in order to refight the Civil War.[1]

The willingness of the sort of conservatives who congregate at *Chronicles* and around Patrick Buchanan to take offense at such insubstantial slights can best be explained ecologically. Since the early 1980s, the environment has grown harsher for conservatives: their numbers are booming, their feeding range is shrinking, and their predators are growing steadily more skillful. Ecological crisis causes aggression in white mice, and, as any cancer researcher can tell you, Man is just a big, hairless white mouse.

But silly and self-interested as the people who articulate them may be, genuine internecine quarrels do exist in conservatism: How big a government should conservatives be prepared to live with? How adventurous a foreign policy is compatible with limited government? How much mutual cooperation can be expected from the various conservative factions?

It is indeed true, as Buchanan says, that quite a number of influential and visible conservatives have shown a dismaying willingness to throw in the towel on the Big Government issue: Fred Barnes in the April 1990 issue of this magazine identified John Sununu, William Bennett, Jack Kemp, and Dan Quayle as the administration's leading Big Government conservatives. In Congress, Newt Gingrich and Jesse Helms throw money at their favored constituencies with nearly as much abandon as their opponents across the floor.

Journalists like Irving Kristol in his occasional columns in the *Wall Street Journal* and Jude Wanniski in the editorials he wrote for the paper in the 1970s have warned Republicans against

[1]Gottfried repeats even more often the weird allegation that he himself lost a tenured appointment at Catholic University of America because a very junior faculty member named Jerry Z. Muller told the university authorities that Gottfried was "anti-Zionist"—at the behest, Gottfried believes, of Norman Podhoretz. If the story is true, the only thing more astonishing than Podhoretz's sway over the Catholic Church is Catholic University's amazingly respectful treatment of its junior faculty.

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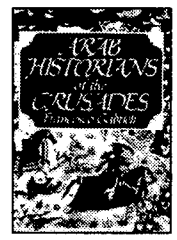

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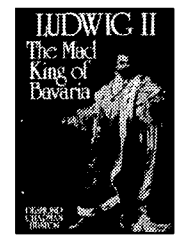

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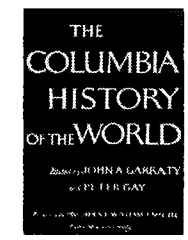

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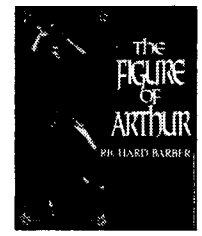

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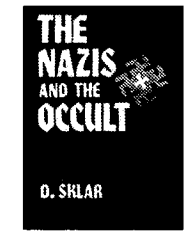

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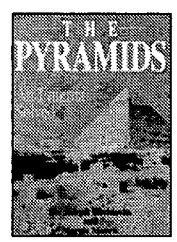

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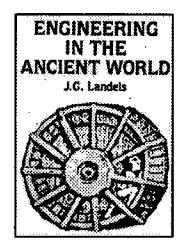

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excessive preoccupation with budget-cutting. Many foreign-policy conservatives—both political figures like Jeane Kirkpatrick and Max Kampelman and commentators like Abe Rosenthal and Charles Krauthammer—seem willing, or even eager, to live with a meddlesome state at home as the price of an activist government abroad. Some of these conservatives attach the "neo" prefix to their politics; others don't. Buchanan's warnings against forgetting that American conservatism is, first and foremost, about limited government should be heeded by all of them.

If only he remembered to heed them himself. Buchanan's taste for limited government and free markets is as inconsistent as any ex-Trotskyist's. Like the blast-furnace left, he's suspicious of economic activity he finds hard to understand. In April 1990, he complained:

> What have the vulture capitalists of the leveraged buyout left us but an endless pile of clippings from *Women's Wear Daily* of their grinning selves and painted women? . . . As Germany and Japan capture markets once held by the United States, the predators slash R&D to paint up the profit-and-loss statement for the lenders; and the hell with the future.

As Greg Jarrell of the University of Rochester and Steve Kaplan of the University of Chicago have amply documented, the "vulture capitalists" have left us, along with the usual human quotient of mistakes and bad deals, a corporate economy that is considerably more efficient and profitable than it was ten years ago.

Buchanan has trouble, too, in grasping Adam Smith's and David Ricardo's lesson that we prosper when foreigners do. His faith in free enterprise peters out at the water's edge. On May 18, he fretted:

> Does free trade make for the efficient allocation of resources? Undoubtedly. But if the efficient allocation of resources means America's unskilled go jobless, while Mexico's unskilled get work, why not come down on the side of American workers? . . . A foreign policy that looks out for America First should be married to an economic policy that considers first the well-being of our own workers.

Nor is Buchanan a consistent small-government man on non-economic topics. One of the greatest intrusions of state power into private life during the Reagan and Bush years—the war on drugs and the concomitant enlargement of federal powers to seize assets and scrutinize financial transactions—has escaped his censure.

Another of Buchanan's challenges to the mainstream of contemporary conservatism, his isolationism, might also have been a needed corrective—if only it didn't have the same now-you-see-it, now-you-don't quality as his opposition to Big Government. There are conservatives who recklessly set no limits on the scope for American activity overseas, who can't pronounce the word "interest" without prefacing it with the word "vital." They ought to be reproved. But Buchanan, who argued for six months against President Bush's determination to use all possible means to eject Saddam Hussein from Kuwait, spent the first half of January denouncing the President's refusal to use all possible means to eject the Soviets from the Baltic republics. When Soviet tanks entered Lithuania the week before the beginning of the air war against Iraq, Buchanan thundered, "Are we with them [the Lithuanians], or with Mikhail Gorbachev?" Indifference to the question of who rules 40 percent of the world's known oil reserves is, in Buchanan's mind, chest-thumping nationalism, but indifference to the question of who rules downtown Vilnius is appeasement of a brutal dictatorship. And while Saddam Hussein—poison gas and all—was, according to the great isolationist, someone the world could live with, the Sandinistas in sleepy Nicaragua and the Marxist government of distant Angola were imminent threats to the security of the Free World.

There is, however, one bone that Buchanan has to pick with other conservatives that he never lays aside: his determination to preserve the present ethnocultural character of the U.S.—or, better yet, to return to the ethnocultural character that prevailed before the social revolutions of the 1960s. Nicholas Lemann's new book *The Promised Land* quotes a March 1970 note of John Ehrlichman's, which records President Nixon saying of his then-speechwriter: "No good politics in PB's [Patrick Buchanan's] extreme view: segregation forever." Twenty years later, Martin Luther King's name still makes Buchanan twitch. "Many liberals," Buchanan wrote in November, "now insist that King's conservative critics bend the knee, pay homage, honor him with a holiday, or be dismissed as bigots. Good for Arizona for rejecting this hypocrisy."

Now, the preservation of the existing ethnocultural character of the United States is not in itself an illegitimate goal. Shorn of Buchanan's more unhygienic rhetoric, and with the emphasis on culture rather than ethnicity, it's a goal that many conservatives share. If anything, a concern that the ethnocultural character of the United States is being changed in unwholesome ways is the quality that distinguishes the conservativism of *Commentary* and the *Public Interest* from the more economically minded conservatism that pervades the Washington think tanks. But there does come a point—it's not always precisely indicated, but most of us know where it is—where ethnocultural conservatism shades into Kook-land.

Kook-land is a terrain that every journalist has seen. Some journalists, though, get to know it better than others. They take a little more care reading the long, handwritten letters from paranoid readers. They weigh the charges of conspiracy a little more thoughtfully. They write back a little more promptly. And the inhabitants of Kook-land have a curious power to anticipate which journalists will be friendliest to them. Almost clairvoyantly, they detect the gnawing resentments, the hidden status anxiety, the carefully concealed sense of unrewarded merit that renders journalists susceptible to the Call of the Kooky.

He earns an income that's rumored to exceed half a million a year. And still he's an easy mark for every Holocaust-denial nut in the country.

Normally, highly successful and well-paid journalists are the most immune to Kookery. Not Buchanan. The man's opinions are carried by half a thousand newspapers and two networks, PBS and CNN. He has replaced George Will and William F. Buckley, Jr. as the most visible conservative in the country. He earns an income that's rumored to exceed half a million a year. And still he's an easy mark for every Holocaust-denial nut in the country.

So, while the questions of the appropriate size of government, the appropriate reach of U.S. foreign policy, and the appropriate rate of change in the ethnocultural character of the United States all matter, the question that matters most in the recurring Buchanan controversies is an easier one: How deeply into kookery can a man who claims to speak for conservatism go before other conservatives are obliged to repudiate him?

This is a question bigger than any one personality, however notorious. It is a question whose answer will tell a lot about whether conservatism after Reagan is to be a real alternative to the political status quo, or merely a protest movement.

While conservatives have been more or less in charge of the executive branch for more than a decade, they have not enjoyed much success in reducing the burden of government. Conservatives have suffered that lack of success not because they have entered into compromising alliances with "ex-Trotskyists" who complacently accept Big Government, but because they have failed to win control of Congress, the branch of government that actually decides how much of the taxpayers' money Washington will spend.

There are four possible remedies to this failure. One is to embrace the Big Government conservatism that Buchanan execrates. Another is to elect more Republicans to Congress, in the hope that a Republican-controlled legislature would be less spendthrift. A third is to effect institutional reforms—term limits, new parliamentary rules in Congress, a balanced budget amendment, a line-item veto that would impose discipline on Congress's spending.

But coalition-building requires a certain etiquette. The members of an electoral coalition do not have to like each other. They certainly do not need to be of one mind on fundamental philosophical principles. But they do have to agree on what should be done tomorrow morning. If some conservatives continue to think that the highest priority remains what it was—a reduction in the burden of government—while others have come to feel that the present burden is perfectly tolerable, so long as the right people are in charge of it, then the conservative coalition is, as Buchanan says, dead.

Small Government, though, is hardly Buchanan's real message, as the inconsistency of his writing about it shows. Neither is a more modest foreign policy. His real message is inseparable from his sly Jew-baiting and his not-so-sly queer-bashing, from his old record as a segregationist and his current maunderings about immigrants and the Japanese. And it's not a message that can be accommodated in any conservatism—Big Government or Small—that seriously hopes to govern a great and diverse country; in fact, it's exactly the kind of message that William F. Buckley thought he had purged from American conservatism back in the 1950s and early 1960s, when he chased Gerald L. K. Smith and the John Birchers away from *National Review*. This exclusion will not disappoint Buchanan very much, since actually governing the country is about the last thing that his sort of conservatism has in mind. What his conservatism seeks is to keep its followers constantly on the boil—to keep their checks coming to his newsletter and their eyeballs glued to "Crossfire." And Buchanan is doing exactly the right thing to achieve that goal: blowing wind. □

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George Szamuely

DESPERADO DEMOCRATS AND THE SICK OFFENSE

Gary Sick's hallucinatory theory—brought to you by the *New York Times*—links Jimmy Carter's defeat in 1980 to Republican conspiring with Khomeini's Iran. Democrats have bought into it out of political desperation and paranoia.

My father used to argue that Joseph Stalin was an Englishman. For there was something fishy about the Russian Revolution, too many inconvenient facts crying out for explanation:

Why were more Communists murdered in its name than at the hands of the most ferocious anti-Communists? Stalin even arranged to transfer German Communists living in exile in the Soviet Union into the safekeeping of Adolf Hitler. *Who benefited from Stalin's nonaggression pact with Nazi Germany?* Not the Soviet Union, whose invasion two years later was greatly facilitated by the attendant partition of Poland. Only Great Britain—whose own invasion was postponed indefinitely—benefited in the short term.

Who benefited from Stalin's installation of Communism in Eastern Europe after the war? Not the Polish, Czech, and Hungarian Communists, whose downfall could have been foretold from the humiliating circumstances of their accession. Certainly not the Soviet Union, saddled with half a dozen impoverished countries that would prove a steady drain on its exchequer. Obviously it was Great Britain that benefited, securing the permanent presence in Europe of its English-speaking cousins from across the Atlantic.

Only one hypothesis makes any sense. Throughout his career in Russia, Stalin worked as a British agent. It becomes obvious when one looks at Stalin's face: Who else could he have been but Lord Kitchener? However far-fetched it may seem, the inconvenient facts fall into place. No trace of HMS *Hampshire*, which allegedly "sank" while bound for Russia in 1916 with Kitchener on board, was ever found. Stalin's role in the revolution was murky, to say the least, and all documents pertaining to it were forged. The murder of the Old Bolsheviks, who must have had their suspicions, suddenly makes sense. Stalin's Russian accent was atrocious. He enjoyed convivial relations with Churchill—the only man who could have known his true identity and to whom he referred as "my old comrade-in-arms." The "percentages agreement" over the division of Europe that Churchill offered Stalin in 1944—the immorality of which has always appeared so at odds with Churchill's conduct—now becomes understandable. The circumstantial evidence that Stalin was Kitchener is strong, even if the "smoking gun" has not yet surfaced.

George Szamuely is a writer living in New York City.

Today, former President Carter and assorted congressmen, pundits, and newspaper editorialists are calling on the House of Representatives to investigate former Carter aide Gary Sick's latest allegations that in 1980 the Reagan campaign team conspired with the Khomeini regime to ensure that the fifty-two hostages seized from the U.S. Embassy in Tehran the previous November were not released until after the elections. If the House sets up an investigative committee, I for one will call on the United Nations to appoint an international panel to investigate whether the Russian Revolution was not from the beginning manipulated by British imperialist forces. After all, no one is claiming that Sick has presented a compelling case; as Mark Shields recently argued, "It's precisely because Sick is so widely respected that his charges have gained such a serious hearing in the press and among elected Democrats on Capitol Hill." Well, all I can say is that my father was no less "widely respected" than Sick is.

But how much respect *is* due Sick? In his *New York Times* article, he claims that "from Oct. 15 to Oct. 20 . . . [there was] a series of meetings in several hotels in Paris, involving members of the Reagan-Bush campaign and high-level Iranian and Israeli representatives." As a result, the Iranians, who had seemed ready to release the hostages, began to adopt delaying tactics. Now, nowhere in Sick's 1985 book on the hostage negotiations, *All Fall Down*, is there any indication of prevarication from Tehran. On the contrary: after October 10, "although there was evidence that the regime in Tehran was making an effort to work its way out of the crisis, I commented to Brzezinski that it was becoming doubtful that they could hold to their original timetable of release before November 4."

Sick claims he has "more than fifteen sources who claim direct or indirect knowledge of some aspect of" the alleged secret meetings. If there are "more than fifteen," how many are there? What exactly is "indirect knowledge"? What is "some aspect"? Sick goes on:

> At least five of the sources who say they were in Paris in connection with these meetings insist that George Bush was present for at least one meeting. Three of the sources say that they saw him there. In the absence of further information, I have not made up my mind about this allegation.

If Sick cannot make up his mind about the veracity of five of his witnesses, why should he feel so confident about the other ten?

Jimmy Carter says that Sick's "evidence is so large, the number of people that make the reports and so forth—I think it has aroused a genuine question." One genuine question is why, given the gravity of his charges, Sick does not immediately submit his evidence to the Justice Department, rather than titillate us with the promise of more information in his forthcoming book. Again, it must be asked how much respect is due Sick, who claimed in his *Times* article that he had never believed the stories about the supposed deal between the Reagan people and the Iranians until he began researching the subject "two years ago." As Daniel Pipes pointed out in the *Wall Street Journal*, as long ago as 1988 Sick had written, "I'm covinced on the basis of what I heard that there were some meetings in Paris. I know the Iranians changed their policy at that time."

Note two basic assumptions: First, that the Iranians were seriously interested in delivering the hostages into the hands of Jimmy Carter, a man they hated with an inexplicable passion. Second, that with the release of the hostages, President Carter, as he himself recently put it, "would've been reelected

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without any problems. In fact, even a week before the election, Reagan and I were neck-and-neck." Both propositions are dubious. For if the difference between a Carter victory and a Reagan landslide was the nonrelease of the hostages, then Reagan's people were right: Carter, who had been well behind in the polls earlier in the year, was seriously misleading the public about an "October surprise" release of the hostages; when it failed to materialize, he paid a heavy political price. Nor, as Lou Cannon pointed out in the *Washington Post*, had Carter been above pulling an "April surprise" at Teddy Kennedy's expense—dropping groundless hints at the time of the Wisconsin primary that a hostage release was pending.

Sick offers no campaign receipts, hotel bills, airline tickets, telephone logs, or any other documents as evidence. His charges, of course, depend on the testimony of shady and unreliable characters. Sick has been cagy about who is on his list of sources, although we know that Jamshid Hashemi is on it. According to Hashemi, he and his brother Cyrus had arranged meetings in Madrid between William Casey and Mehdi Karrubi, the current speaker of the Iranian parliament.

Of the Hashemis' background, Sick mentioned only Cyrus's "cooperation with the U.S. Customs Service in a dramatic sting operation that resulted in the arrest of several Americans, Israelis and Europeans on charges of plotting illegal arms sales." It took Sick's former White House colleague Lloyd Cutler to add that the Hashemi brothers were indicted in 1984 for illegally exporting weapons to Iran during the Carter Administration. Upon arrest, they claimed they had had the administration's blessing—a lie, according to Cutler, who argues that the Reagan Justice Department would hardly have pressed charges if the Hashemis had been in a position to blackmail the U.S.: "In fact, the Hashemis' bargaining position was so weak that the prosecutors pressed Cyrus into cooperation with [the] 'sting.' "

We do not know who else is on the list, but it is quite likely to include Barbara Honegger, who worked as a researcher in the Reagan campaign and enjoyed brief fame in 1983 when she resigned from the administration, accusing it of doing nothing to advance women's rights. Shortly afterwards, she began claiming that on October 24 or 25, 1980, someone in the Reagan campaign had told her there would be no "October surprise" because "Dick cut a deal"—Dick being Richard Allen, Reagan's first national security adviser. Earlier in her career, Honegger had been a vocal champion of parapsychology. As John Fund reported in these pages in December 1983, her unpublished autobiography *Omens of Power* accounted for George Washington's presidency by pointing to the symmetry of the three stars in the constellation Orion's Belt, explained the link between the Dog Star Sirius and the Masonic goal to "establish a new world secular order," and spoke of the "coincidences that link Ronald Reagan . . . to the ancient and secret Masonic tradition."

There is also Ari Ben-Menashi, who claims to have been in Paris on October 20 with Casey and Mehdi Karrubi. He asserts that he was employed by Israeli Defense Forces Military Intelligence; the Israelis claim he was merely "a translator at a junior level."

And there is Richard Brenneke, who claims to be an arms dealer and a money-launderer. Testifying during the sentencing of his friend Heinrich Rupp on a bank fraud conviction, he asserted that both of them had been at the Paris meeting on October 20. Indeed, Heinrich Rupp said that he had personally flown Casey there. Also in attendance, according to Brenneke, was Donald Gregg, a CIA official attached to Carter's National Security Council who went on to become Vice President Bush's national security adviser. The upshot of these wild charges was that the Justice Department charged Brenneke with making false statements. He was later acquitted: though he could provide no proof for his assertions, neither could the government disprove them.

For how do you prove that you were not in Paris? If someone had seen you earlier in the day, you could have flown later on the Concorde. If there is no record of your trip, you could have traveled under an assumed name. Gregg said he was on the Delaware coast that weekend, and provided a photograph of himself and his family on a sunny beach. But a meteorologist claims it was cold and cloudy that weekend in Delaware. Sick regards this as confirmation that the Paris meetings took place (although he purports not to be using the unreliable Brenneke, Gregg's major accuser, as a source). But if it had been sunny in Delaware that weekend, would that have *dis*proved anything?

Jack Blum, who had worked for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee narcotics investigation, claims he interrogated Brenneke in depth for four months, and that Brenneke never mentioned this trip to Paris until he heard the "October surprise" story from Barbara Honegger. Moreover, Blum says, just about every statement Brenneke made to the committee—including assertions that he had worked for the CIA and that he had been a player in the arms trade—was a lie.

And then, of course, there is Abolhassan Bani-Sadr. The former president of Iran lost out to the mullahs and has been living in exile in France since 1981. He has claimed that he had documentary proof of an agreement between Reagan's people and the ayatollahs. Yet in his autobiography, *My Turn to Speak*, he quotes only from the transcript of the sentencing hearing where Brenneke first made the charges. According to Shaul Bakhash of George Mason University, "Bani-Sadr is a prime believer in conspiracy theories. If you look at all the other things he believes, it is really no surprise he believes this one as well."

Christopher Hitchens, who almost singlehandedly kept the story alive through the lonely 1980s, cheerily admits to eschewing empirical criteria.

Clearly the quality of the witnesses is a bit of a problem for Gary Sick. For Christopher Hitchens, however, who almost singlehandedly kept the story alive through the lonely 1980s, it is not. He cheerily admits to eschewing empirical criteria: "I start from the hypothesis whether it is conceivable, given everything we know about Casey, that if the offer was made to him that in return for the sale of arms the Iranians would not release the hostages until after the election, would he turn around and leave? If we assume he would not and we know such an offer was made to him, then we can only draw one conclusion."

Hitchens dismisses Barbara Honegger as "insane" and Heinrich Rupp as "a fascist," but likens the search for a "smoking gun" to the historian David Irving's challenge to all comers to find one document to prove Hitler authorized the Final Solution. Lack of evidence is only proof of the effectiveness of the coverup.

In fact, the conspiracy itself makes about as much sense as a Final Solution without Hitler. Why would Casey take off for Paris a fortnight before the elections? Paris is a long way, and a two-day disappearance would likely be noticed. If it was so essential for him to be present, why could the meeting not have taken place in Mexico or Panama? How could Casey be sure that his Paris visit would not be noticed by the French security services or by the local CIA station? And even if he went undetected, how could he be certain his Iranian and Israeli interlocutors would go undetected as well? Jimmy Carter today claims that back in 1980 he heard "rumors and allegations" of meetings between Reagan's people and the Iranians but refused to believe them. Why? With Carter trailing badly in the polls and with Iran a major preoccupation of the CIA throughout 1980, would it not have been sensible for Carter to ask his friend CIA director Stansfield Turner to look into these "rumors and allegations"? Obviously, Turner did not have then, nor does he have now, any information to support them. But this has not stopped him from adding his voice to those calling for an investigation.

The story makes no sense on two important historical grounds. On October 11, Carter offered the Iranians $150 million worth of military equipment in return for the release of the hostages. Why would Iran—having just been invaded by Iraq—reject a deal with a President who could provide arms in twenty-four hours, in order to deal with a campaign manager, who at the very best would have nothing to offer for three months? As Sick himself explained at the time, the Iranians "were shrewd bargainers; and they would probably calculate that any president, assured of four years in office, would be less likely to compromise than a president fighting for his political life." Quite so: the Iranians rushed to complete the negotiations with Carter's people, so much so that Sick professed himself amazed, in *All Fall Down*, that the final package "was, in several key respects, less advantageous to Iran than the offer the United States had on the table in October." If the Iranians had a second offer on the table, they certainly didn't behave like the "shrewd bargainers" Sick claims they were.

And, from whatever source, did the Iranians ever get all that much military equipment? Given that Iran lost the war largely because Iraq was able to obtain vastly greater quantities of arms, it is absurd to raise the question. This is the big weakness of the conspiracy theory: there was no payoff and there were no diplomatic relations (the half-baked 1986 sale of arms notwithstanding). The Reagan Administration even initiated Operation Staunch to prevent third countries from selling arms to Iran. True, Israel continued to ship fairly small quantities of arms to Iran after the fall of the Shah, in keeping with its fear of Iraq. Israel did not stop these shipments until Carter pressured Begin after the siege of the embassy. That the flow of arms from Israel resumed after Car-

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ter's fall is not surprising: with so little intelligence available on Iran, Casey, as new director of central intelligence, believed the Israeli contacts could prove useful, provided the quantity of arms shipped was small. While the Reagan Administration didn't approve of the sale, nor did it wholly disapprove.

The "Stolen Election of 1980" is part of a familiar mythology. Nineteen eighty-eight was the year of Willie Horton, 1972 of Watergate, 1968 of Nixon urging the South Vietnamese to reject a peace agreement they had no intention of accepting anyway. Democratic fiascoes can always be blamed on some piece of Republican skulduggery. The Democrats are now calling for an inquiry in the vain hope of making people forget their shoddy performance during the Gulf crisis.

There is nothing wrong with a full congressional investigation. As Mark Shields said in a recent column, "If the Reagan campaign did in fact deal illegally and unconscionably with the Iranians to keep American citizens in brutal captivity just to win some electoral votes, then Heaven and History demand vengeance." By the same token, should the allegations prove groundless, Heaven and History will demand vengeance against the frivolous accusers, Jimmy Carter and Gary Sick. Let the investigation begin. □

John Corry

THE MOST CONSIDERATE OF MEN

An old friend remembers the Polish-American novelist Jerzy Kosinski, a victim of twentieth-century thugs both East and West.

When I heard that Jerzy Kosinski had killed himself, I was furious and then I cried, a not uncommon reaction, I suspect, among so many people who knew him. "I'm about to put myself to sleep," he said in a note to Kiki, his wife, and then lowered himself into a bathtub half-filled with water, tied a plastic shopping bag around his head, and died. What a whole gallery of twentieth-century thugs had been unable to do to Jerzy, Jerzy had done to himself. The author of *The Painted Bird*, *Steps*, *Being There*, and eight other books, was dead at 57. Jerzy, I thought, how could you?

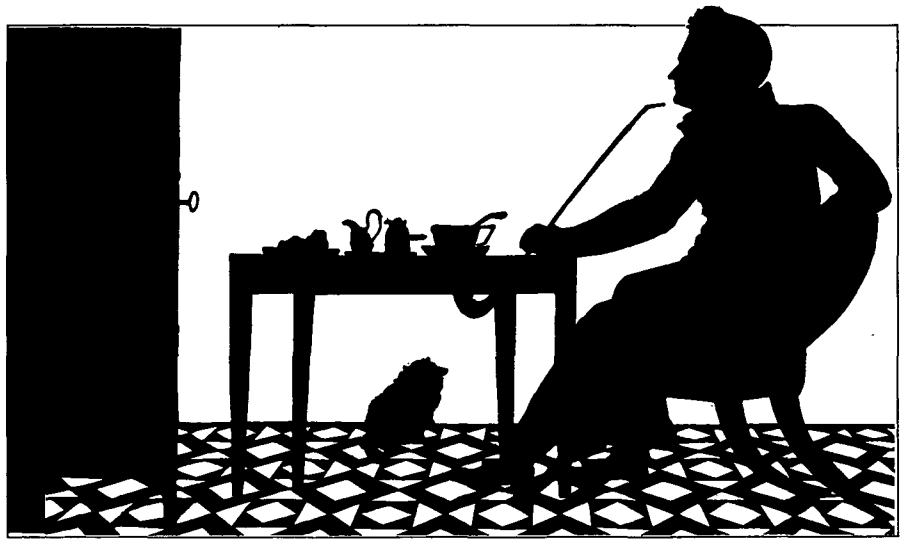
Well, he could because he believed it was the correct thing to do. Jerzy was his own master. His heart condition had worsened and, as he said in the note to Kiki, he feared he might one day be a burden. He was the most considerate of men, and the possibility of becoming pitiable must have appalled him. Besides, his writing had not been going well, and if his health got worse he would be unable to write at all. That would have been the same as death. Words meant more to Jerzy, perhaps, than to any other writer.

His life and his art testified to that. He was concerned with language and the mystical property of words, and what words and language could do. He once described Poland, which he fled in 1957, as a cage of words that had been placed around him by the world's most malevolent author. "I saw myself imprisoned in a large house of political fiction," he said, "persecuted by a mad bestselling novelist, Stalin, and a band of his vicious editors from the Kremlin, and, quite logically, I saw myself as a protagonist of his fiction."

Indeed he did, and he saw himself as the protagonist of his own fiction, too, although he could never quite come out and say it. Critics said his works were autobiographical; he said they were novels. Declare the works pure fiction, however, and he would insist everything in them was true. No other novelist of his time so joined his life and art, and no other novelist had his life so confused with his art. That was the Kosinski conundrum. His inner landscape was no secret—you had only to read the books to know that—but the outside topography was mysterious.

Who was this exotic, hawk-faced man who aroused so much speculation? To begin with, he was witty and charming, and utterly bereft of malice. He was also a pain in the ass. He would badger friends about what he thought were matters of high importance, and keep badgering until he wore them out. He was fastidious, punctilious, and elegant. On the other hand, he made fun of himself. He mimicked his accent, ridiculed his physique, and laughed at his own eccentricities. He was a trickster, joker, and con man who was incapable of telling a lie. He was a casualty, mishap, and survivor who always feared he might hurt someone himself. He was, in short, one of the best men I knew.

I first met him in the late 1960s, just after he had won the National Book Award for *Steps*. Late at night he would nurse a glass of wine at a literary bar on Second Avenue and talk, firing words in bursts and ricocheting sentences and whole paragraphs off the walls and floor. Then he would fall silent and suddenly be out the door, taking his puns, epigrams, and dark humor with him. The other drinkers would speculate about where he had gone, though mostly, I suspect, he just went home to bed. Once he and Kiki invited me and my wife to dinner at their apartment on West 57th Street. After dinner, he told us he had a secret hiding place. If we left him alone for thirty seconds and then came back, he said, we would not be able to find him.



My wife and I stepped into the hallway, walked as far as the elevator, and then came back to the apartment. We looked under the bed and in the closets; we examined the furniture, windows, and doors. Kosinski had vanished. I remember being uncomfortable; for some reason I felt embarrassed. Finally, a cupboard door popped open and Jerzy unfolded from a shelf, where he had been lying behind some books. No matter where he lived, he said, he always had a hiding place. I had never met a Holocaust survivor before.

It was unpleasant, however, to think of that; in those days it was better to think of Jerzy as the subject of outrageous, appalling, but somehow amusing stories. Everyone knew them. Kosinski had missed a connecting flight to Los Angeles, where he was to stay at the home of Sharon Tate and Roman Polanski, because the airline had misplaced his luggage. That night, the Charles Manson gang invaded the household and butchered Miss Tate and her friends. The next day, Kosinski called the airline to complain again about the luggage. There were many stories about Jerzy Kosinski. You believed some, dismissed others, and treated a few as sly jokes. There were two running jokes in particular: Kosinski worked for the CIA and ghostwriters wrote his books.→

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That the jokes might have political purpose never occurred to me; that sleazy bureaucrats and Communist party hacks wanted to discredit a writer was unthinkable. I could not imagine that commissars had set slanders adrift like noxious fumes in their own stale air and then waited for cultural winds to disperse them. Kosinski's life was unimaginable enough already.

At age six, he had been separated from his parents and sent to live in the countryside when Germany invaded Poland. Everything afterwards, I think, always came back to that. His life as a child on the run from the Nazis became the basis for *The Painted Bird*, his first and most enduring novel. The boy in the novel is brutalized by villagers, but that is not its point. When Elie Wiesel reviewed *The Painted Bird* in the *New York Times*, he noted the "terrifying elements" in the "metamorphosis of the boy's mind." The boy discovered evil and learned the world was a dangerous place. He learned "every one of us stood alone." Wiesel was sensitive to that, but mistaken when he thought the narrator, the boy, was a Christian. "And their victim was neither Jew nor Gypsy," he wrote, "but a forlorn Christian child of good Christian parents." Of course, Jerzy Kosinski was Jewish.

Wiesel had read something that wasn't there; others would do that, too. Jerzy had not characterized the boy in *The Painted Bird*, other than saying the villagers thought he might be a Gypsy. Indeed, Jerzy had not even identified the boy as Polish. There was an artistic rationale for this—Jerzy once wrote a booklet explaining it—but a simpler one will do. Jerzy purposely had made his own outline obscure; if he could exist in the shadows, so to speak, it would be harder to track him down. The villagers, wherever they might turn up, would not be able to find him.

In Poland, Jerzy had taught sociology at the Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. In New York in 1958, he received a grant to do post-graduate work at Columbia. In 1960 he published *The Future Is Ours, Comrade*, and two years later *No Third Path*, both under the pseudonym Joseph Novak. They were nonfiction works about life in the Soviet Union—Jerzy had gone to school in Moscow in the early 1950s—but they suggested the novels later: the nearly anonymous Novak reported what he saw, expressing no viewpoint overtly. "The descriptions contained in this book do not propose moral codes and involve no judgments," Jerzy wrote in an epilogue to *No Third Path*. "They are sketches."

That wasn't true; Jerzy was just being slippery. The sketches showed a Communist society made up of oppressed and oppressor, and plainly Jerzy had made judgments. Years later, when the left got serious about discrediting him, it said the CIA had sponsored the publication of Jerzy's Novak books. It produced no evidence, of course, and in truth the spooks had had nothing to do with them, although it might have been nice if they had. The Novak books had literary merit, and they presented a more telling picture of the moral bankruptcy of Soviet life than the clunky memoirs Langley then seemed to favor.

The Painted Bird was published in 1965; *Steps* came three years later. "Celine and Kafka stand behind this accomplished art," the *Times* review said then. It was extraordinary, really. A man who escaped Hitler and Stalin had published four books in ten years in a language he had not grown up speaking. The *Times* of London compared him to Conrad, and certainly that was apt. His searches for just the right English word had been prodigious. In the beginning, he would even call telephone operators late at night and try out words on them: Excuse me, miss, but I am a foreigner, and I do not know what this means. Later *The Painted Bird* went through nine full drafts; Jerzy made sixteen or seventeen copies of each draft and passed them on to friends. "I chose some people whose language was not English, and some who were Americans," he once explained. "I asked them to make a little cross next to anything that didn't sound right. If enough people marked a sentence, I knew something was wrong with it."

There were two running jokes in particular: Kosinski worked for the CIA and ghostwriters wrote his books.

An eccentric technique, perhaps, and one not likely to be taught at, say, the University of Iowa's celebrated writing classes or the earnest poetry hutches of the New School; but Jerzy, as I said, was his own master, and for him it worked wonderfully well. *The Painted Bird* will survive after most other books are forgotten. Surely, it was the making of Jerzy Kosinski, just as it was his undoing. That, however, came later, and for years Jerzy thrived. In 1970 he received the American Academy of Arts and Letters award for literature. In 1973, he was elected president of the American chapter of PEN, the international association of poets, playwrights, editors, essayists, and novelists. The next year he was re-elected, serving the maximum time allowed.

He was an incongruous choice. PEN was approximately as politically diverse as the Soviet Writers Union, an organization with which it eerily shared some positions. (A few years after Jerzy left office, world PEN, with its American chapter applauding, sanctimoniously expelled the Chilean chapter, while allowing chapters from all Communist and Third World countries to remain.) Jerzy put PEN to actually doing something useful. He led it in a campaign to free writers imprisoned by tyrants of both the left and right. The key word here is "both." Before Jerzy, PEN had recognized only one kind of tyrant. When he left office, PEN's board of directors passed a resolution that said he had "shown an imaginative and protective sense of responsibility for writers all over the world," and that the "fruits of what he has achieved will extend far into the future."

I did not see Jerzy often in the years after that, although I did hear things about him. Whatever the fruits of his achievement at PEN, he was growing suspect in literary circles. He was too raffish, too prominent, and too likely to turn up as a guest on David Letterman. Warren Beatty had cast him in the movie *Reds*. Jerzy seemed to know everyone important. He referred to Henry Kissinger as Henry, an indictable offense in itself. His real sin, though, was that he was still his own man in a world where everyone else was the same.

There was, for example, the incident with Jack Abbott. Abbott, an imprisoned murderer, had corresponded with prominent writers, passionately pressing them to adopt his Marxist-Leninist worldview. Norman Mailer and others detected a rare literary talent in Abbott's letters and campaigned to have him released. Kosinski declined to join the campaign; he called Abbott a "misguided leftist." Mailer and his friends persisted, however, and Abbott won his freedom, a beneficence he repaid by immediately stabbing to death a young actor in the East Village. In the aftermath, Kosinski spoke of "criminal chic," and said the writers who supported Abbott had been drawn by his ideas and not by his talent. A few months later, the *Nation* magazine sponsored a conference of something called the American Writers Congress. It was a wholly anti-American gathering—financed by the usual foundations and the National Endowment for the Arts—and Jerzy said it reminded him of Eastern Europe. Eventually, it was only a matter of who would mug Jerzy first.

As it turned out, it was the *Village Voice*. It ran a long story that said Jerzy had hired editors and ghostwriters to write his books, and that he was connected to the CIA. This, it said, was his "dirty little secret." The story was trash, full of evidence that purported to prove one thing, but which, read carefully, proved nothing at all. It was nasty, venomous, and sly, a paradigm of the distasteful, and had no purpose other than to discredit Jerzy and take his identity away. The terrible thing was that it was successful. The story in the cheesy little New York weekly was picked up all over the world. The *Times* of London even put its account on page one. Italian, French, and West German publications repeated the accusations, and an imaginative few made up some of their own. (*Les Nouvelles Littéraires* in Paris asked why Kosinski carried a gun, had dozens of false identities, and kept tear gas bombs in his car.) The story turned up in daily papers in Turkey and Japan and Malaysia. And in Poland, where each innuendo and outright fabrication about Jerzy had come from in the first place, the Communist press quoted European and American articles about the story in the *Village Voice* as proof of what the government had been saying all along: that Jerzy Kosinski was an inveterate liar.

It was *The Painted Bird*. As I said, everything in Jerzy's life always came back to that. Even the headline in the *Voice*—"Jerzy Kosinski's Tainted Words"—had been a reminder. (How nasty that was; Jerzy had bled over those words.) When Jerzy published *The Painted Bird* years before, Warsaw had set out to hurt him. He was not an ordinary anti-Communist émigré Pole; he was a celebrated anti-Communist Pole, and so he had to be discredited. *The Painted Bird*, the propagandists said, slandered Poland. In fact, it did not, but since the novel was banned, who in Poland would know? The campaign went on for years: Jerzy used ghostwriters; he worked for the CIA; he plagiarized other novels; he was part of a Zionist conspiracy; nothing he said could be trusted. It was all fantastic, but in its way it worked quite well. Over time Warsaw's emissions spread like swamp gas and the *Voice* missed only the Zionist conspiracy.

After the *Voice* published its story, I told my editors at the *New York Times* I wanted to investigate its charges against Jerzy. Fine, they said, and I wrote a long article, carefully documented, tracing Warsaw's involvement. When it was published, however, it had an unexpected effect. Other publications attacked the *Times*. The best the other publications could say about Jerzy was that the charges against him were not proved. He deserved better, but he was not really surprised because he knew how treacherous words could be. It meant the villagers had finally caught him. □

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Charlotte Allen

THE FRENCH CORRECTION

Foiled in their predictions that a black market in the fabled French abortion pill RU-486 would flourish in the U.S. under import restrictions, proponents now say the drug is being kept from scientists eager to cure a host of diseases. In fact, the FDA does allow importation for research; it's the drug's parent company that wants it kept out.

In October 1989, I wrote an article for this magazine chronicling the wishful hype surrounding the French abortion pill, RU-486: It was a "morning-after" remedy. It was painless. It was harmless. It could be taken in the privacy of one's home (no more demonstrators!). It would solve the Third World's population problems. It was a quick, non-traumatic way for a woman to rid herself of pregnancy with the help of a glass of water.

I pointed out that in France—the only country where it is available to the general public—taking RU-486 required three to four visits to an abortion hospital and careful medical supervision in a sophisticated First World setting, that heavy bleeding was a near-certain side effect, and that the chief aim of RU-486's promoters was to get the drug onto the U.S. market fast, bypassing the Food and Drug Administration's decade-long approval process.

Because RU-486 is a powerful steroid (it causes the uterine lining to dissolve, flushing out the embryo) with long-term effects that may include birth defects if the abortion fails, the campaign had all the earmarks of the first stage of a medical and litigational disaster on the order of those accompanying the first generation of birth-control pills and the Dalkon Shield. Nonetheless, practically every time you opened a newspaper in 1989, you could read Molly Yard or Eleanor Smeal or a house editorialist direly predicting a widespread "black market" in RU-486 if the FDA did not approve the drug for general use *immediately.*

When the article appeared here and in reprint in the *Wall Street Journal*, I was roundly ridiculed in letters to the editor. That fall, Dr. Etienne-Emile Baulieu, the French physician who invented the pill in 1982, won the prestigious Lasker prize for developments in medicine. Rumored to have his eyes on the Nobel Prize as well, Baulieu published an explanatory article simultaneously in *Science* and the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. About 2,000 Frenchwomen a month had been procuring abortions via RU-486 since October 1988. As 1989 drew to a close, the pill crested in repute.

True, Smeal, Yard, and others were unable to find a U.S. drug manufacturer willing to produce or apply for FDA approval of RU-486, despite a vigorous campaign. In June 1989, the Food and Drug Administration, apparently taking those threats of a black market seriously, issued an "import alert" barring admission of the drug into this country for personal use, while allowing it for research purposes, including clinical trials. But in California, then-Attorney General John D. van de Kamp offered the entire state to RU-486's manufacturer, Roussel-Uclaf, as an abortion-pill laboratory, with the drug to be available to all takers. (The New Hampshire legislature recently followed suit with a similar offer.)

Since then, my 1989 observations about the less pleasant aspects of RU-486 seem to have crept into the press vocabulary. Encomia to the ease and privacy of taking RU-486 are rare these days. About the only old-style burbler still on the scene is Mark Green, commissioner of consumer affairs for New York Mayor David Dinkins, who is trying to spearhead a mayors' crusade to bring the pill to the nation's large cities, along with an "education" campaign to bombard Americans with favorable propaganda. In a January interview with *New York Newsday*, Green characterized the heavy bleeding that RU-486 induces—about nine days' worth on average, with about one percent of recipients needing transfusions—as "just like menstruation." (Green did not return my calls.)

The media now routinely note that the drug, when used alone, is only 60 to 80 percent effective in producing a complete abortion, far less efficient than the most common form of surgical abortion, vacuum aspiration, which has a 98 percent success rate. Even when used with the labor-inducing abortifacient prostaglandin, as Roussel-Uclaf's protocols require in France, the drug has a 5 percent failure rate. Prostaglandin has too many adverse side effects to be used alone, but it lessens the risk of hemorrhage that RU-486 seems to entail.

Roussel-Uclaf's protocols require RU-486 to be administered at a hospital, where the woman is supposed to be carefully screened as a likely candidate: healthy, middle-class, and committed enough to her abortion plans not to change her mind. She has a pregnancy test. A week later—because France has a week-long waiting period for abortions—she goes back to the clinic to take the pill, then returns in forty-eight hours for another test. If she has not aborted, she gets a shot of prostaglandin and stays in the hospital another two days or so until an abortion occurs or she has to have a surgical procedure. Besides bleeding, common side-effects include pain, vomiting, diarrhea, and—in about 5 percent of the cases—an incomplete abortion or failure to expel the placenta, which also necessitates surgery. The European press has reported at least two instances of heart failure, and in April a Frenchwoman died, apparently in response to the prostaglandin.

The media now also note that RU-486 is effective only during the brief window between when a woman suspects she is pregnant and the seventh week after her last menstrual period. Finally, independent studies in France indicate that the lengthiness and complexity of an RU-486 procedure can exact an emotional toll on the woman, who has to see the 3/4-inch-long embryo so that she will know she has aborted. In French clinics, the women reportedly meet in support groups while they wait the long hours for the prostaglandin to work. As Roussel president Edouard Sakiz himself says, a pill-induced abortion is "an appalling psychological ordeal."

Now, however, there is a new round of RU-486 hype, and it's taking the exact opposite tack of the campaign two years ago predicting a black market for the drug. Today, promoters claim that, because Roussel monitors the drug so carefully, there's no black market in RU-486 whatever and not likely to be one in the future.[1]

Similarly, proponents no longer tout RU-486 as a "miracle" abortifacient; instead, they hail it as a "miracle" cure for a variety of afflictions having nothing to do with pregnancy: breast cancer, Cushing's syndrome, endometriosis, and AIDS. The purpose of the new hype is to force the FDA to drop its import alert.

It should be noted at the outset that neither the FDA nor any other federal agency forbids research on RU-486. Although the Department of Health and Human Services bans federal funding of abortion research, the FDA does allow RU-486 into the country for privately funded research, both abortion and non-abortion related. The import alert applies only to personal use of the pill. Needless to say, non-abortion related research on RU-486 in the U.S.—about ten ongoing projects—and abroad has been sparse and the published results inconclusive. A three-month study of twenty-two postmenopausal women with breast cancer published in 1986 in the *Bulletin of Cancer*, a French journal, showed improvement or stabilization in twelve of the women after six weeks, but by the end of the study eight of those had suf-

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[1]No one mentions the black market nowadays except the hapless Mark Green, who declared in his *Newsday* interview: "If it stays on a blacklist in the U.S., it will inevitably lead to a black market here. That means wealthy women will have access, but the poor 16-year-old will not, or worse, may use it without adequate medical supervision." Dinkins's administration had earlier announced it was considering offering Roussel the use of New York's public hospitals for RU-486 clinical studies, but rejected the idea when it realized that the main users of those hospitals are poor blacks and Hispanics.

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fered a relapse. A study published in 1985 in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism* of a single patient with Cushing's syndrome—an endocrine disorder that afflicts mostly women and brings on osteoporosis, loss of memory and strength, and other indicia of premature old age—showed remarkable improvement after nine weeks on RU-486. But a study of seven more patients published in the same journal the next year led to such equivocal results that researchers concluded the drug was not yet a "routine" treatment for Cushing's patients.

Laboratory studies of human cells, rats, and mice indicate that RU-486 and others in its steroid family could be useful therapies for tumors and immunosuppressive diseases such as AIDS, but they have not been followed by published clinical studies. There appears to be no published work at all on RU-486 and endometriosis, the uterine-lining overgrowth that makes menstruation painful for many women, although there apparently have been some small trials. As medical ethicist Arthur Caplan told *Business Week*, RU-486 "would be just another interesting substance" were it not for the abortion controversy.

If the FDA's alert does not apply to RU-486 imports for worthy research projects, what is the problem? The problem is Roussel-Uclaf. Since December 1988, the French company has refused to allow the export of the drug for any purpose to any country that does not meet four rigid criteria: (1) availability of prostaglandin, (2) tight control of distribution, (3) the woman's signing a form binding herself to a surgical abortion if the RU-486 does not work, and, most crucially, (4) an atmosphere in which abortion is not only legal but "accepted by public opinion." Roussel has decided that American attitudes toward abortion are not acceptable. Scientists, physicians, and pro-choicers have been flying to France in droves to beg for the drug for more than two years, but Roussel has not budged. Part of the problem may be that the National Right to Life Committee has threatened to boycott the chemical and industrial products of two U.S. subsidiaries of Roussel's German parent company, Hoechst, A.G., if RU-486 comes to this country as an abortifacient.

The aim of the RU-486 proponents is to persuade Roussel that this chaotic scene somehow means that the whole country is almost 100 percent pro-choice, ready to elect Molly Yard president, except for a microscopic percentage of "lonely hecklers," as Dinkins calls them. The right-to-lifers may look numerous with all their churches, but there really aren't more than one or two of them, maybe five or six.

The proponents of RU-486 have constructed a Rube Goldberg chain of causation: The right-to-lifers persuade the Food and Drug Administration to slap an import alert onto the drug. This, in turn, "sends a signal" to Roussel that the right-to-lifers have more power than they actually have, and Roussel refuses to export the drug to America for any reason, including scientific ones not covered by the import alert. So if your sister dies of breast cancer, you know who's to blame.

There have been plenty of physicians and patients ready to play their roles in an elaborate pantomime of finger-pointing. Writing in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* last September, Dr. William Regelson, an oncologist on the faculty of the Virginia Medical College, accused right-to-lifers and the FDA of colluding to impede basic scientific research on life-threatening diseases. Similar charges began to appear in the popular press. Rep. Ron Wyden, the strongly pro-choice Oregon Democrat who leads the House Small Business Committee's subcommittee on regulation, called a hearing on November 19 to investigate the need for legislation to address this matter, subpoenaing countless FDA documents and summoning the personal presence of Ronald Chesemore, the agency's associate commissioner for regulatory affairs, and two associates.

Although Wyden was the sole subcommittee member present, the hearing proceeded like all congressional hearings presided over by Democrats when a Republican administration is in power. Wyden hectored the FDA officials as if they were on trial for their lives, all the while preaching that the FDA should consult scientists, not "politics." Sure enough, one of the witnesses produced a petition from 1,000 scientists begging the FDA to lift the ban. In January, Wyden introduced a bill that would specifically forbid the FDA from barring the import of RU-486. The aim of the bill, Wyden's press secretary Wendy Horwitz informed me, is to "send a signal" to Roussel that American public opinion supports the drug. An op-ed piece signed by Wyden appeared in the *New York Times* on April 10, touting his bill and complaining once again that politics was getting in the way of "unfettered scientific research." The timing of the article was not good. The same day, the *Times* reported on the first death from RU-486 in France. Roussel blamed the death on the prostaglandin and immediately switched to a different brand for its French protocol. The French government tightened its restrictions on who can take the pill.

Still, Wyden's marshaling of researchers and cancer patients to fight the pro-choicers' import lobbying battle has paid off with sympathetic newspaper reports and a coast-to-coast slew of editorials. Some reporters, however, have been more skeptical this time around; *Business Week*'s John Carey and the *New Republic*'s Dorothy Wickenden declined to take at face value the extravagant non-abortion therapeutical claims proponents are making for RU-486. But the drug's supporters seem to expect, even demand, sympathetic press coverage. When I asked Wyden's press secretary Horwitz whether the feminists' prediction of a black market didn't make it logical for the FDA to issue the import alert, her temper flared. "You sound like you're on the other side," she declared. And RU-486 lobbyist Marie Bass refused to speak to me, complaining about my 1989 story: "You made me look as though I didn't care about women's health."

The American Medical Association, strongly pro-choice and on the record as favoring the legal availability of RU-486 for research, took the position that the FDA "acted responsibly in issuing import restrictions."

Wyden was also unable to get full support from the medical community. Embarrassingly, the American Medical Association, strongly pro-choice and on the record as favoring the legal availability of RU-486 for research, took the position that the FDA "acted responsibly in issuing import restrictions" for the drug. AMA trustee P. John Seward testified, "We do not believe that there has been adequate research to establish that this drug is a safe and effective therapeutic modality."

When I spoke with Regelson, he complained vociferously about FDA bureaucracy and about the right-to-lifers, who, he said, "are against sex for fun." Then he launched into a tirade against what seemed to be the real source of his annoyance, Roussel, whose representatives he has been unsuccessfully lobbying for cancer research funding. "I can't understand their philosophy. Their strategic approach to this drug is bizarre. Abortion is not where it's at. We need good contraception," he said, noting some research indicating that RU-486 can function as an ovulation inhibitor. "For population control, you need contraception, not abortion."

Roussel, not right-to-lifers, holds the key to the stand-off, and some observers have suggested that the threatened boycott has nothing to do with Roussel's intransigence. Hoechst's chairman, Wolfgang Hilger, is a devout Roman Catholic, and there is evidence that Hoechst made the decision not to market RU-486 in the United States long before the threat of a boycott. Indeed, Roussel started marketing the drug in France in October 1988 only under orders from the French government, which owns a 36 percent interest in the company.

The other hypothesis is that Roussel is playing hardball, holding out for a specific assurance from the U.S. government that RU-486 can be offered some protection from liability in any lawsuits that arise. After all, that dead woman in France would have an estate worth millions in the litigious United States.

The liability issue is likely to be the core of the next round of hype. The RU-486 promoters have been among the supporters of federal product-liability reform bills, which would strictly limit a drug manufacturer's financial exposure in injury suits. An interest in product-liability reform would under normal circumstances leave the pill's supporters on a collision course with consumer groups, usually their natural allies.

Mark Green, who voiced his support for liability limits in the *Newsday* interview, worked five years for Ralph Nader, whose Public Citizen consumer organization has categorically opposed any liability limits whatsoever. But Public Citizen is lying low in the battle over RU-486, as is the Consumer Federation of America. So is the Women's Health Network, which a few years ago raised questions about the drug. Meredeth Turshen, a Rutgers University psychology professor who heads the network's New Jersey division, voiced concerns about the drug's side effects at a panel discussion sponsored by the American Public Health Association. Now she says that a report of her remarks published in the *AMA News* misquoted her. "I support abortion," she told me.

For RU-486 has come to be viewed by almost everyone, supporters and critics alike, as largely symbolic, its value rooted in nothing having to do with concrete experience—not ease of administration, not women's health, not the well-being of Cushing's and cancer sufferers. Its value is strictly abstract, like the "right" to an abortion, the most abstract of all rights anyone has ever read into the Constitution. □

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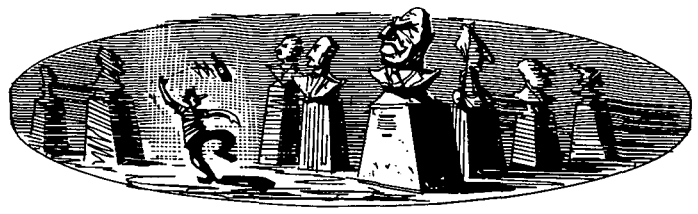


WHAT'S IN A GOOD NAME?

by Adam Platt

Often in Washington, the rumor of a prominent man's demise is finalized in a social way. In the case of Clark Clifford, word began to move not long after the eminent lawyer first appeared on the news program "Sixty Minutes." At issue was Clifford's representation, before various government agencies, of an unseemly and ultimately crooked group of Middle Eastern investors controlling the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI). Mike Wallace pursued the story in his resolute and seedy way. Clifford, at 84 on the verge of canonization, played the role of aggrieved pontiff. "What I am so vitally interested in," he told Wallace at one point, "is my good name."

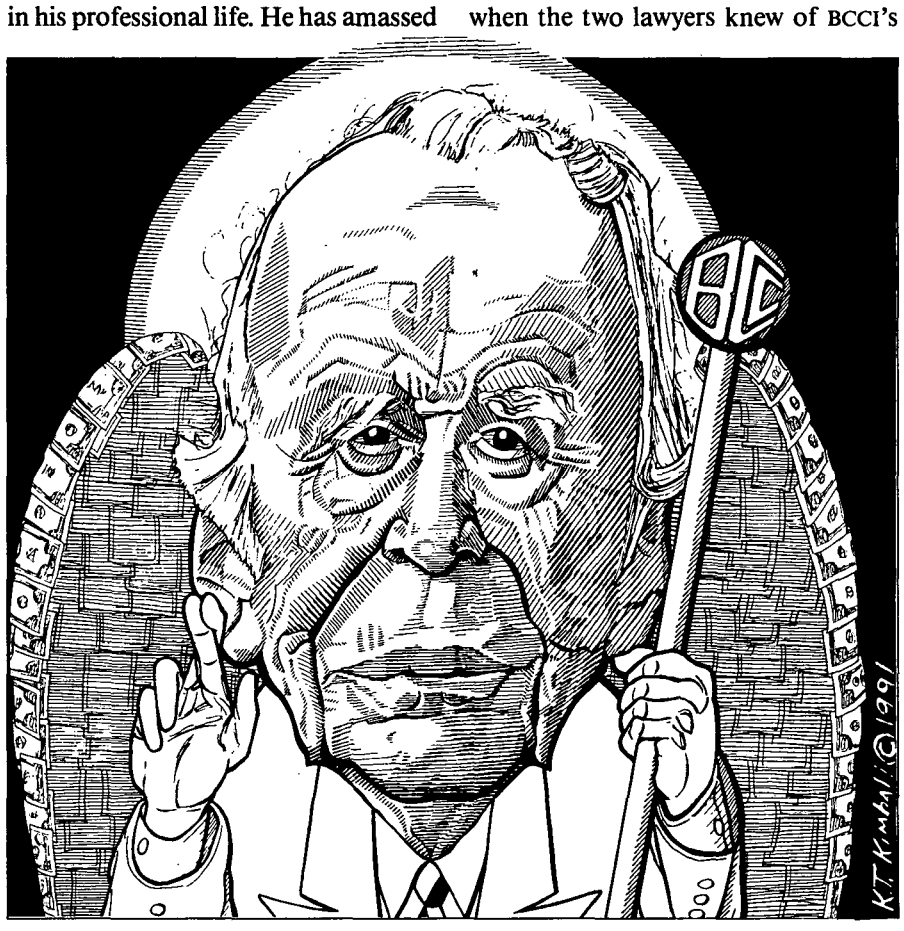
This spectacle, inconclusive as it was, flabbergasted many of the old lawyer's friends and supporters. At dinner one evening, a fairly grand Washington figure, someone with long experience in Clifford's world, grasped my elbow, and, apropos of nothing in particular, said, "Poor Clark; poor, poor Clark." The inference was clear: on some fundamental level, Clark Clifford was finished. He was getting "beat up," as an old friend of his put it. Even if he were to be cleared, such treatment was unacceptable for a man of Clifford's stature. His "good name," once part of his cachet, was gone.

Publicly, Clifford's old allies are closing ranks. "Clark's a very sensitive fellow," says a former government official who served with Clifford during the Johnson time. "He's been around a long time and done a lot and I'm not interested in shooting at him." Conventional wisdom has it that, with age, the grand vizier lost track of all the strings he was pulling. Those closest to the man remain incredulous. "I am befuddled," says *New York Times* columnist Leslie Gelb, who served under Clifford at the Pentagon. "Clark is a man of absolute discretion, trust, and good judgment. Up until this damn event—whatever the devil happened there—I can't believe you would have gotten a different opinion from anyone."

Gelb is right. In Washington, Clark Clifford has been generally revered. His public career, spanning nine administrations—three of which he played a substantial role in—has been remarkable by any modern standard. As chief political adviser to Harry Truman, Clifford organized presidential poker games and plotted electoral strategy with equal facility. He has been used as a kind of political talisman by Democratic Presidents ever since. He was Kennedy's personal lawyer and, for a brief, unhappy time, Johnson's secretary of defense. Truman offered him a place on the Supreme Court, and Kennedy considered doing so. In his mannered, acutely affable way, Clifford dissuaded both men. "I am an advocate," he said, "not a judge."

Clifford has followed a similar path in his professional life. He has amassed millions as a legal fixer, an advocate for clients as various as Howard Hughes, Bert Lance, and the state of Algeria. "A large, masked figure," one of his contemporaries calls him, "a master of the machinery in the basement." Always Clifford has operated with a high degree of discretion and, until recently, with a high degree of success. "After the Truman administration, Clark went out and became the leading five-percenter," says one of his contemporaries. "I don't know whether Clark invented the phrase or his critics did. In any case, he was the original five-percenter in Washington, and he was the best at what he did."

No one I talked to believes Clark Clifford will actually be indicted. A more likely candidate is his law partner, Robert Altman, until now best known as husband to the star of the old TV show "Wonder Woman." The *Washington Post* is reporting that he and Clifford made millions from a sweetheart stock deal financed by BCCI. A Manhattan grand jury is also trying to decide if and when the two lawyers knew of BCCI's alleged ownership of controlling stock in First American Bankshares Inc., the $11 billion bank holding company in Washington, D.C., of which Clifford is chairman. For over ten years, he also served as legal counsel to BCCI. Last January, in Tampa, BCCI pled guilty to charges of money laundering. In March, the Luxembourg-based bank admitted to holding secret shares in the U.S. bank, something Clifford had long denied.



Clifford graciously begged off an interview with *The American Spectator.* "You will understand," he told me over the phone, "I am overscheduled at the moment." He has complained to Mike Wallace, and to the *New York Times*, that he was "gulled" by a Pakistani banker named Mohammed Hassan Adebi. Adebi, who founded BCCI, retained Clifford in the late seventies to finesse the purchase of First American Bankshares. Adebi was put on to Clifford by Bert Lance, who dropped out of the transaction after taking considerable heat in the press. Clifford moved the deal through, in part by vouching personally for Adebi and his fellow investors before the Federal Reserve Board. As with all subsequent dealings with BCCI, Clifford says he did this in ignorance of the bank's shady activities, and therefore in good faith.

His explanation may not satisfy Republicans on the House Banking Committee, who have requested subpoenas for Adebi, Altman, and Clifford. They are also asking the Fed why it took nearly a decade to begin scrutinizing BCCI. "By 1985, various major U.S. banks wouldn't do business with them because the stench was so high," says Jack Blum, who investigated BCCI in 1988 for a Senate judiciary subcommittee chaired by John Kerry. Aside from being Manuel Noriega's favorite bank, BCCI has been implicated in a $2 billion S&L debacle in Miami and a possible arms-purchasing scheme with Iraq. When Kerry asked for explanations, Clifford went to bat for the bank before the committee. Committee investigators have since accused BCCI's lawyers of stonewalling. Clifford says he was mis-

Adam Platt is co-author of I've Seen the Best of It, *the memoirs of Joseph W. Alsop, which will be published by W. W. Norton next January.*

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led. Either way, he looks like a shill.

These must be bitter times for the grand old man. Friends describe him as being deeply wounded by the whole business. His memoirs, long coveted by New York publishers, were published in May.[1] The book is an impressive historical document. In it, Clifford takes pains to portray himself as a government part-timer. "I always considered myself an amateur in politics," he writes, "a professional in law." Outside of time in the Navy, he has spent only six years of his life in public service. But he deals with questions of state, of foreign and domestic policy, at length, as if these were his full-time calling. Although the tone of the prose is deceptively flat, there is a consciously Achesonian ring to the whole performance, sometimes appropriate, sometimes not.

Clark Clifford's basic instinct for government has always been shrewdly political. He came to Washington from St. Louis at the relatively advanced age of 38, but quickly earned a reputation for extreme competence, although some of his more august contemporaries thought him a calculator and a fraud. The tall, highly dressed lawyer became a great favorite of Pauline Davis, the reigning social hostess of the day. Alice Longworth—the eldest daughter to Teddy Roosevelt famous for her wicked tongue—used to call him "Pauline Davis's counter-jumper"; counter-jumpers being the shop clerks, always male, hired by the great Midwestern department stores to ingratiate themselves with female customers. Gen. George Marshall was not a fan. Marshall, serving then as secretary of state, was incensed when Clifford pushed Truman to recognize Israel in 1948. "Marshall thought he was a nitwit and a political operator," says one former Truman official, "and I rather shared that view."

Clifford presents this confrontation with Marshall as a defining one; indeed, he opens his book with it. He insists that Truman had already decided on early recognition of the Jewish state, and that he was merely advocating established policy. "I knew what the President wanted," he writes, "and, more importantly, how he felt." Clifford calls Marshall's accusation that he played election politics with the issue "grossly unfair." Maybe so. Marshall was clearly wrong about Israel, and Clifford was right. But for a time, leading up to the final decision in May 1948, Truman had favored letting the U.N. sort out the question of Israeli statehood. According to Truman biographer Robert Donovan, Clifford was "a source and a conduit" for intense lobbying efforts by pro-Zionist groups and election-conscious Democrats in Congress.

Whatever the history, Clifford clearly wants to establish himself as a man of high policy, not a political fixer. Yet when he did hold genuine government responsibility, Clifford's policies were usually reactive, as in his famous flip-flop on Vietnam. Clifford came out privately against the war as early as 1965, but was shouted down by Robert McNamara, the leader of Johnson's hardline claque. He was such a vociferous hawk thereafter that Johnson chose him to take up the cause when McNamara begged off. "Johnson was a brutal fellow," says a former official who served under both men. "Clark sensed that and fed it back to him." When the administration began to take real political fire after the Tet offensive in January 1968, Clifford reversed field again. By the time Johnson announced he would not run for re-election, Clifford had abandoned him completely for what was, by then, the prevalent Democratic view of the war.

Clifford's account of how he maneuvered Johnson to halt the bombing and move toward peace talks in Paris makes for riveting reading. He was cursed by hardliners for this, his major role in history, and lauded by everyone else. But no one doubted that LBJ had misjudged his man.

John Kennedy never made that mistake. More than any of Clifford's Presidents, Kennedy gauged perfectly the old lawyer's changeable, pragmatic quality. It was Kennedy who joked that Clifford had requested nothing in return for his services, save that "the name of my law firm be printed on the back of the one-dollar bill." As Kennedy's lawyer, Clifford organized the White House transition, got Teddy rehabilitated by Harvard after the notorious cheating incident, and even persuaded a recalcitrant landlord to rent the Kennedys her country house. These were tasks the old advocate, who declares again and again that he was "completely happy" in private practice, was glad to do.

In fact, Clifford was always at his best working the margins of political power. A partisan Democrat, he shunned electoral office because "I preferred to work with greater deliberateness, in private, with time for careful preparation." He made the decision early to cash in his chips, and he never really wavered. That his "good name," so fiercely nurtured all these years, should be impugned now, long after the money has ceased to matter, is ironic, but not completely surprising. "Some people say it's very sad that Clark's career should end with this kind of mess on his shoes," one longtime lawyer in the city told me. "I find it interesting. If it happened to me or to someone who was close to me, I would find it sad. But I find it hard to be sad about the way history operates. This shows that Clark is one of us."

For a character so unique to Washington, Clifford is now suffering a peculiarly local fate. He is at the center of scandal, practically convicted without trial. For men who have attained a certain level in government, legal proceedings often take a back seat to public spectacle and innuendo. Their reputations are price enough for a single misstep. So while the richest legal talent argues Clifford's case in New York, the vultures have begun to gather, taking a piece here, a piece there. Old friends cluck their tongues. Old enemies smile. Clifford welcomes the press into his office, famously dim and cluttered with mementos. He waves his hands about his face and smiles solicitously, trying to work the old magic.

There is a real sadness to this spectacle. The hurried publication of his memoirs could go a long way to restoring the old luster, but Clifford is fair game now. "It was possible I had been used," he writes in a note on the BCCI mess. Of course he had: in various subtle ways, being "used" has been his business for more than four decades. Despite his protests to the contrary, Clifford has been trading on his reputation for years. In the end, it was the deliberate sale of his "good name" to Adebi & Co. that got him into trouble. Now his displays of public bereavement seem a little desperate, his voice a little shrill. He has been robbed of a last historical flourish, and he knows it. Instead, he must now play a role he wants no part of. He's an old man in a well-tailored suit, fighting a rear-guard action in a town that never holds heroes for very long. □

[1] *Counsel to the President: A Memoir*, by Clark Clifford, with Richard Holbrooke. Random House, 709 pp., $25.00.

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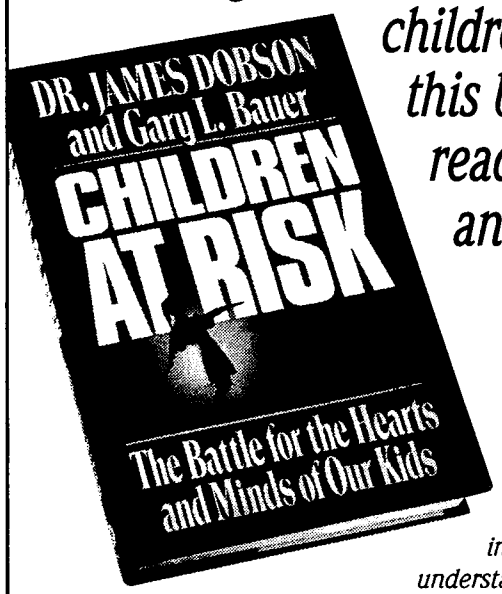

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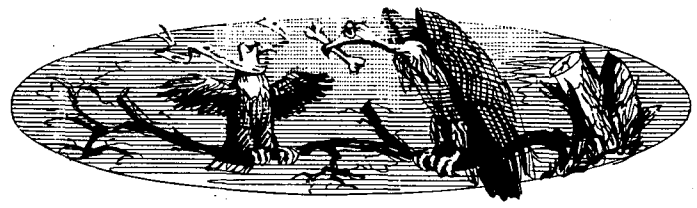

THE MAKING OF A VICE PRESIDENT

by Kevin J. McNamara

George Bush's recent brush with mortality showed yet again that everyone has an opinion about the man who sits an irregular heartbeat away from the presidency. Unfortunately for Dan Quayle, the prevailing opinion is not a kindly one. Yet most people believe Quayle is not qualified for the position he holds because that is what newspapers and television have been telling them ever since his nomination to the vice presidency in August 1988.

Ideological considerations aside, the negative coverage probably originated with reporters' having been caught off-guard when Bush made his choice in New Orleans. Far from their Washington sources, they had to start from scratch in their assessments of Quayle, focusing not on his record in government and politics but on his personality and private life, specifically: (1) his age—41—and alleged lack of experience; (2) his brush eight years earlier with lobbyist and *Playboy* model Paula Parkinson, and (3) his Vietnam War–era enlistment in the Indiana National Guard. To a lesser extent, they examined his undergraduate academic performance and his family's wealth.

Any mention of Quayle's public record was buried under an avalanche of personal trivia. After one month and a hundred stories devoted to Quayle, for instance, the *Washington Post* ran an article with a headline that indicated the newspaper had perhaps failed to convey much of substance about Quayle: "Still a New Quantity to Many Voters, Quayle Works to Help Fill in the Blanks." The rival *Washington Times* admitted the press was in the dark, headlining one story "Surprised Television Newsmen Query: 'Who is Dan Quayle?'" At the height of the 1988 campaign, Ted Koppel of "Nightline" asked ABC News correspondent Jackie Judd whether she had ever reported on the substance of Quayle's views, "rather than the *image* of Dan Quayle."

"Give me a minute to think about that," she said, and hesitated. "I have to tell you I think not."

The sorry portrait of Quayle that emerged from this kind of coverage—and the sheer volume of it—left an indelible imprint on public opinion.

Yet the news media once described Quayle very differently. Until his nomination to the vice presidency, Washington correspondents praised Quayle with the kind of superlatives that inevitably brought him to the attention of people like, well, George Bush. If Quayle was not a household name as a senator, neither was he obscure. According to *The Ultimate Insiders: U.S. Senators in the National Media*, by Stephen Hess, Quayle received virtually the same level of press coverage as Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, against whose "stature" his own would be unfavorably compared.

Moreover, journalists' assessments of Quayle during this period were consistently laudatory. A few examples:

- Early in his first term as the junior senator from Indiana (1981-87), the *Chicago Tribune* put Quayle among an elite group of six "rising stars" in the United States Congress.
- In 1984, veteran *New York Times* reporter Hedrick Smith said in a front-page article that Quayle "has emerged as a leader of the 16 Republicans elected in 1980."
- In 1985, *Congressional Quarterly* said Quayle "has built a reputation as a pragmatic, thoughtful senator with an interest in finding ways to make the Senate work more efficiently." In addition, *CQ* said, he had created "a smoothly running constituent service operation."
- In 1985, the *New York Times* reported on a study listing Quayle among "the twelve most underrated members of Congress." The twelve senators were chosen, the *Times* said, because "they are unpretentious, rarely partisan legislative professionals who are candid, well-informed, and not prone to self-promotion."
- In 1986, *National Journal* credited Quayle with a "deft performance" in office. "Contrary to the predictions made in 1981, Quayle has been a Senate success story," the *Journal* continued. "He may not yet be in the top rank of senators in power or skill, but he has clearly made himself a force to be reckoned with. Some who have watched him believe that his potential is unbounded." The article listed only three senators as "potential Senate leaders." Quayle was one of them.
- In 1988, *Politics in America* said: "Quayle today is seen as a diligent senator willing to work on complicated defense issues and interested in reforming Senate procedures to make the chamber function more efficiently."
- In 1988, *The Almanac of American Politics* said: "In the Senate, Quayle has been one of the most active and successful members of the Republican class of 1980. . . . Dan Quayle brings to the Senate sunny good looks, a cheerful temperament, and an inclination that many observers found surprising to dig into issues, do his homework, and come up with workmanlike legislative solutions to problems of government." The write-up concluded that "Quayle is not a political accident, but a fortunate young man with good political instincts."
- National newspapers continued to report on Quayle's work in the Senate right up until Bush introduced him in New Orleans. The *Wall Street Journal* followed Quayle's successful effort to clarify the INF treaty well into 1988, featuring prominent articles about—and also by—Quayle. Eleven days before Bush announced his vice presidential choice, Quayle's photograph appeared in the *New York Times*, with mention of his role as leader of Republican opposition to a pending defense bill.

What had Quayle done to deserve such coverage? For one thing, there was his legislative record, a brief summary of which would include the following: he played a key role in securing Senate approval of the sale of AWACS surveillance aircraft to Saudi Arabia; introduced a comprehensive tax-reform plan in 1982, before Bill Bradley unveiled similar legislation; authored and won approval of a bill that he and others would later view as his finest legislative accomplishment—the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982; headed a panel to study Senate procedural problems in 1984 and developed reforms which, though ultimately rejected, were said by the *Almanac of American Politics* to "address genuine problems sensibly"; secured enactment of two key defense procurement reforms; won Senate approval of a measure that required American and Soviet negotiators to close a loophole in the INF treaty; and was chosen to lead Republican opposition in the Senate to major trade and defense legislation.

Moreover, there was his political record, which included two House races and two Senate campaigns—all victorious. Quayle was recruited in 1976, according to *The Making of a Senator: Dan Quayle*, by Richard F. Fenno, Jr., only after "all the obvious, experienced candidates had declined to run" against a "very popular" eight-term congressman, Ed Roush. Quayle was 29, had no electoral experience, trailed in the polls 61-27, and "almost no one believed he could win." He won.

In 1980, he challenged Birch Bayh, an 18-year Senate veteran and one-time presidential contender whose polls showed him forty points ahead of Quayle. "Very few people thought [Quayle] could win," Fenno writes. He won again. When re-elected in 1986, Quayle received a higher percentage of votes than any previous candidate for the U.S. Senate from Indiana.

This was the Quayle that George Bush selected as his running mate, and in introducing him in New Orleans, Bush stressed the praise that had been heaped on Quayle in the media: "Senator Quayle is one of the rising stars in the Republican Party. In fact, the *National Journal* called him a Senate success story."

The rest, as they say, is history. □

Kevin J. McNamara is an assistant director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia.

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BEN STEIN'S DIARY

THE WONDER YEARS RECEDE

by Benjamin J. Stein

Friday

I can't sleep anymore, so I got up at seven and took Trixie for a walk. At this hour, West Hollywood is quiet and even delightful. One of the legion of doormen at the Shoreham Rock'n'Roll Towers walked along with me and talked about conditions in his native Ethiopia. He was not looking forward to any great changes in his country, he said, even now that Mengistu has been thrown out.

"The problem," he said, "is that we have too many provinces, and they do not want to be in one country, and they all have arms, and they kill each other, and that won't stop."

At the desk of my building, an attractive blue-eyed woman talked to the concierge. We rode up in the elevator together and I learned she lived next-door to me. She's a well-known TV reporter and anchorwoman. "I don't handle the fluffy stuff," she said. "I handle hard news, like the Oscars, what's happening at the ski resorts. Not fashion or lifestyle pieces. I was trained at Ohio State and it was pretty serious."

A series of frantic calls back and forth to New York to fact-check items in a story by yours truly about a player in a collapsing daisy chain scheme who happens to insure people's lives. My fact-checker was a woman "from the Islands" in the Caribbean who could barely speak English, had almost no background in finance (no, make that *no* background), and also could not stay near the phone long enough to take my calls. It was left to her boss, a man in his fifties who is a true genius, to finish the job.

When I consider the general level of productivity of younger workers, and their general lack of connection with the larger world, I tremble. Just as if to emphasize my point, the phone rings and it's Wendy, a beautiful woman whose father has offered to pay her way through law school. The problem is that she cannot really stand to take tests, mostly because she prefers to ski. Also, she is not quite sure exactly what a law is, and wonders if lawyers get to make up laws as they go along. Maybe she's got it right. Myres McDougal had a theory that lawyers could do exactly that. Legal realism. Could Wendy, on her ski slopes in her little bunny outfit, have come upon the same theory as McDougal and Harold Lasswell? From Squaw Valley to the Sterling Law Library at Yale? It could happen.

Out to a meeting at a TV production company, where a group of us sat around and talked about a TV show which would star little *moi*. It would be about a man who was frozen in a Defense Department experiment in 1955, then thawed in 1991, and how he adjusts to being back in a world he never made. I would play the guy who was frozen.

On the way back from the meeting, a TV producer told me she was making a MOW (movie of the week) about teenage sex. "We've just discovered," she said, "that teenage girls have sex largely to express their unhappiness and to get back at their parents and to get attention. This has just been discovered since 1990, and we think it's worth making a movie about."

A nap in my little condo, which is about the highest point in Los Angeles, and then back to a meeting at a hotel with a major league producer. On the way, I ran into totally stopped traffic, what we call a "sig-alert," on La Cienega. One schmuck in an ancient Oldsmobile had crashed into one crummy stop sign, and hundreds of cars were immobilized, along with their drivers. A metaphor for life. I sat in the car with Trixie and ate candy. She started to get so nervous that she threw up. That's how it is here. The traffic makes even the dogs sick.

My car phone rang. It was a call from Tricia, the mother of a lovely girl of about sixteen who was badly injured in her school during her drama lighting class when several huge lights fell on her. The girl was in a coma for two weeks, and then recovered almost completely. The family is suing the school, and Mom is really upset.

"My lawyer tells me that Tanya [the daughter] could easily get a million dollars, but Bruce and I won't get a thing. That means she could be rich and we wouldn't be rich. And I asked her if she would lend me $200,000 for the down payment on a new house, and she just laughed at me. I mean, how long have I been wanting a house with a gourmet kitchen? And who stood at Tanya's bedside all those nights while she was in a coma? And now I'm not supposed to get a new house out of it? I really can't believe how selfish my own daughter is. Maybe you could talk to her."

This could be just coincidence, but Trixie threw up again just as I put down the car phone.

The producer was staying in a bungalow at the Beverly Hills Hotel. He was an emaciated man reading a newsletter about gold bullion. "You look familiar," he said to me. "You look like that economist Herbert Stein. Do you know him?"

"He's my father," I said. "That's why I look like him. Knowing him by itself would not have the same effect."

"That's what I like about you, boychik," the producer said. "You're well spoken. That goes pretty far in this world. You're well thought and well spoken."

The producer wants me to write a feature about what happens if Moses comes back to earth and sees whether or not people are following the Ten Commandments. He gave me a few general commandments of his own about "arc" and "franchise" and then showed me photos of his new estate in Scotland. He's a Brooklyn boy who made money producing pictures, and now he's about to become a laird in some poor valley near Perth.

Someday I am going to wake up and life will make sense. I hope so. Maybe not. The producer waved his hands around and jumped up and down and told me how the script should go, and I watched him. I was wearing a jacket from Polo and a Hermes tie, and he was wearing jeans and a sweatshirt. What can that mean?

The producer patted me on the back and told me that he was sure it would be a great movie, and that we should certainly expect Kevin Costner to play in it.

I drove out to Malibu and watched the sun set over toward Santa Cruz Island. I got a telephone call from my friend Earl, a yacht salesman in Miami who is losing his mind from worry about money. I got a call from my pal Lenny, who is marketing the world's best suntan lotion, made with his very own "tri-solar" compound, which may or may not be baby oil. He is also losing his mind from worry about money.

The gravity of money. I used to make enough of it so that I felt weightless. I could buy anything I wanted except real estate. It was great. It was like being high all of the time. I can see why people would commit huge scams and crimes over it. I don't make much money any longer, and I feel its mighty gravity pulling me down to earth. In a way it's a good thing.

A call from my pal Wanda, a young woman who goes to the same self-help

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group I attend. She is twenty. She was a 14-year-old crack addict at the American High School in Ankara, Turkey. It was called Heroin High, she once told me. Anyway, she was lonely for her dad, who is with a big bauxite firm in Turkey, and she's here in the 'Bu all alone.

"If you're ever really lonely," I said, "you can come over and sleep in the guest room."

Ten minutes later, she showed up at my door. She tried to talk to me about the used car she wants to buy, but I told her I had to read about junk bonds. She came into my office anyway and tried to talk about which guys had crushes on her and which were the richest.

"Wanda, did you know that the children of Israel wandered in the desert for forty years after they crossed over the Red Sea and they got so crazy about not finding Israel that they forsook God and made a Golden Calf and bowed down and worshipped it?"

"No," she said. "I did not know that. Whose children were they again?"

"Israel's."

"You mean like they were Israelis?"

"No, I mean they were Jews."

"And Jews worship calves? I thought that was Hindus."

"No, the Jews just briefly worshipped calves and then they were shamed by Moses into the worship of God once again," I said.

"So, they don't worship calves anymore?"

"The point is about the gold," I said.

Wanda looked at me for a long moment and said, "Will you come look at Volvos with me this weekend? I think I'd like to get a Volvo."

Thursday

An unusual day for little me. I'm in Washington, D.C., to testify about bank deregulation before Congressman Ed Markey's Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Finance. It's a thrill because, while I have done a fair amount of testifying before committees, this is the first time that I've been on a panel with my father, the braino economist. He's against bank deregulation, too. It's not a complex issue, really. It sort of goes back to whether you want a reprise of the S&L catastrophe. If you do, then you want bank deregulation. If you don't, then you don't want bank deregulation. In fact, you want a lot more regulation.

I should tell you that I love Washington. I especially love the part inside the Beltway. I remember when the Beltway was first finished between Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue. I drove my parents' Chevy V-8 Impala so fast on a curve that I could feel the car start to lose its grip on the road. Anyway, I love Washington. The people in the government offices and in the law firms and in the restaurants all look so buttoned-down and calm. They don't look totally insane, like most of the people I see in L.A. Even the witnesses who were in favor of deregulation looked sane. They were 100 percent mistaken, but they looked intelligent and thoughtful. Or at least one of them did. The other was a lobbyist, I guess.

Congressman Markey is my hero. He's the first government official I have ever met whom I really look up to who's younger than I am. He has a good sense of humor, a kind face, knows his subject cold, and is generally a paradigm of what a congressman should be. I know others may disagree.

The only problem I had on the panel came after I had said: "The problem of bank deregulation basically comes down to this: 'Thou shall not steal.' " A representative from Tennessee asked me angrily if I was testifying as an economist or as a showman. Whereupon my old Dad grabbed his microphone and said, "The fact that a point has been made forcefully does not in any way mean that the point is false or mistaken."

I was really happy. How many other boys of 46 get to have their fathers stick up for them at a congressional hearing?

Monday

Back in glorious Malibu, up at the crack of dawn to rush into town to act on "The Wonder Years." Now, this is a bittersweet moment indeed. Part of this episode is shooting at the John Muir Junior High School in Burbank, where I went for my first episode almost three years ago. I had no idea I would become a regular character, and I only remember that they had to pry my fingers off the dressing room door when I left because I loved it so much that first time.

Today's episode is about Kevin Arnold, the star played by Fred Savage, graduating from John F. Kennedy Junior High. It took me a minute to realize that, if I'm his Science Teacher, and he's leaving school, then this is probably my swan song on "The Wonder Years."

In the script, I make a mistake in a chemistry experiment and blow up my lab. At the graduation ceremony, I'm swathed in bandages, with my arm in a cast and my chest in one, too, and I have to say that it's a fitting metaphor of just how hurt and sad I feel that the glory days of yours truly as a teacher on "The Wonder Years" are coming to an end.

I take back all of those things I said about Hollywood.

I sat on the stage and watched several hundred 13-year-old extras pretend to graduate. When Fred Savage came by, he looked at my bandaged self and said, "Ben, that's so cool." Then he gave me a thumbs-up sign.

That's all right for Fred. He'll still be in the show next year.

Tuesday

Der Tag. The last day on the set of "The Wonder Years." The Killing of Brother Cantwell. The set was mobbed with extras, with gaffers, lighting men, sound men, boom men. Mei Li, the costumer; Sheilah, her sister, also a costumer; Wendy, also a costumer; Gary, the A.D.; Christine, who makes snacks all day for us; Michael, the producer/director; Bob, the producer/writer; Topolsky, the producer/new father; Fred Savage, the star; Josh Saviano, the co-star; Roger, the prop man; Art, the second prop man; and dozens more, who had all seemed like part of a permanent family. As such, they were a lot like parents when you are eight years old. Pests and nuisances and always there. But now that I am leaving, they seem ineffably sweet and wonderful.

We hustled and bustled around the stage for a few hours, and then I had to do my main thing before leaving. The gag is that I, as chemistry teacher, have blown up my classroom inadvertently. See, I'm mixing two chemicals and I get distracted by a fight between Fred and Josh, and then, as the fissionable plutonium mixes with the fluoride or something—*Boom!*

A special-effects man has been hired to rig two "air cannons" to blow the doors off the classroom. All of the camera crew and sound people are behind barricades. The "gag" is that I, along with a hardy hand named Skip, stay behind in the exploding classroom so that I can be filmed looking terrified as the explosions go off. My first stunt-work. The routine is that I see my mistake, step back in horror, put my hands over my ears, and duck. To tell the truth, I was scared. But, I thought, if I do it I might get asked back to be a guidance counselor next year.

So, after a few rehearsals, they lock us in the room, give me a cue by "walkie," and then I look horrified, set down my boiling beakers, and duck. *Boom!* went the air cannon, and I was on the floor under a blanket. It all went fine, and I can see why people take risks.

We did not get to the final scene until about 11:00 p.m. In this one, we see a closeup of me as I handle the boiling beakers and look terrified. Then a closeup of the beakers boiling over onto my hands. It was all swell, and I think I looked properly terrified and scared, especially since the boiling stuff really did hurt and burn.

That was it. The crew applauded, and that was the last time that the science classroom will ever be used. It was just a prop. Workmen had already started to take it apart as I packed up my clothes. □

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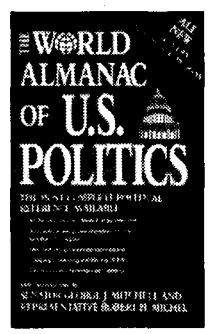

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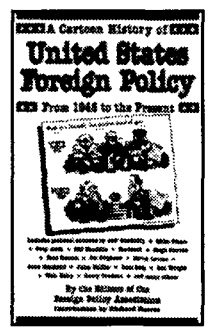

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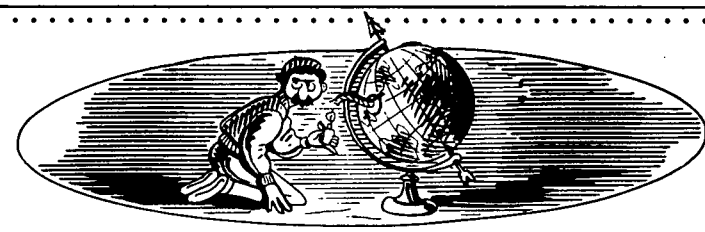

ENDURING INDIA

by Jennifer Howard

My hostess, the wife of a self-made businessman, supervised the houseboy as he brought in a never-ending series of courses, encouraging us to eat copiously in honor of her 18-year-old daughter's engagement. A slight woman in a black *salwar-kameez*, a baggy-pants-and-loose-top ensemble worn as an alternative to a *saree*, she smiled at me over the well-laden buffet table. "I love Americans," she said. "They're so frank."

I wasn't frank enough to tell her what I thought of such generalizing, but I heard a lot of it in New Delhi. From dinner parties to informal, in-house gatherings over ginger- and cardamon-spiced tea, Delhiites spend a great deal of time drawing broad conclusions about groups of people. This spring, as the country braced for late-May elections, much of the grist for the conversation mill came from the waves of communal and separatist violence that have swept over the north of the country from Kashmir to Assam. Last year, nearly 4,000 people—almost double the 1989 figure—were killed in Punjab alone. Even before the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi on May 21, common wisdom held that the country hasn't been in such a mess since Independence and the horrors of Partition that accompanied it.

To read the Western coverage, you might think that rioting between Hindus and Muslims over a controversial mosque in Ayodhya in the state of Uttar Pradesh had started the whole mess. Rioting in Uttar Pradesh took fifty lives, and spread to the neighboring state of Bihar, where as many as 2,000 Muslims died in the communal clashes.

With the help of militant Hindu groups such as the Vishwas Hindu Parishad (VHP), the fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata party (BJP) organized a month-long agitation campaign last fall to rally support for building a Hindu temple at Ayodhya. When then-Prime Minister V. P. Singh sent troops in to disband the agitators, the BJP withdrew its support for his 11-month-old Janata Dal–led coalition government, helping to topple it in a November 7 vote of no confidence.

The mosque dates back to the mid-sixteenth-century Mogul emperor Babur. Some Hindus claim that it was built on the god Ram's birthplace, thus desecrating a holy site. Some say that there was originally a Hindu temple there, which Babur tore down. Muslims maintain that several sites are known in local lore as the birthplace of Ram, and they were provoked when some of the more militant Hindus laid a foundation stone for a temple to Ram within the precincts of the existing mosque. The case has gone to the Supreme Court in Delhi, which is weighing the conflicting historical and theological evidence.

But, as the dinner-party conversations of Delhi make clear, resolving the Ayodhya case won't put an end to the recurring violence. The problem goes to the heart of Indian society. Ask Delhiites about communal violence and they'll often point the finger at anyone but the members of their own community. A well-educated young woman of 23—computer expert, student of homeopathic medicine, and progressive enough to have earned a pilot's license—had strong opinions on the subject. She told me that it was impossible for Hindus to be the cause of violence because of the age-old tolerance of their religion. "It's the Muslims who cause all the trouble," she said.

A Hindu civil servant who has risen through the bureaucracy to become secretary (second only to the minister) of a government department, told me that his religion could never breed fundamentalists. Hindu fundamentalism, he said, "is a contradiction in terms."

How this opinion jibed with the unabashedly fundamentalist agenda of the BJP eluded me. The party's omnipresent symbol, the traditional Hindu lotus blossom, adorns walls from Delhi to Agra to Calcutta to Bombay. No longer an emblem of peace, it now stands as a rallying point for devout Hindus closing ranks against non-Hindus and reformers like Singh.

The Indian press, free and raucous, has lately been full of examples of communalism at its worst. The newsweekly *India Today* devoted a special report in January to the communal violence. The rioting, it said, "was a brutal throwback to the days of Partition, of friends stabbing each other because they suddenly discovered they belonged to different communities." In a stylistic outburst that would curl an American editor's hair, the writers concluded that "the blood that flowed down the narrow gullies in these towns stained the conscience of the country like never before."(That kind of rhetoric goes over well with the readership of *India Today*; in the "Letters to the Editor" section, Shakespeare gets quoted no fewer than four times.) Those same descriptions could just as well apply to Punjab or Kashmir as Ayodhya. The growing cracks in Indian society run not only between ethnic and religious groups but through them. Delhiites talk more about inter-Hindu caste turmoil than they do about Ayodhya.

So Singh's attempts to address India's caste problem had as much to do with his fall from power last November as the Ayodhya mosque crisis. Fundamentalist Hindus blame him for setting up the Mandal Commission to look into the plight of the lower (in Hindi, "backwards") caste. In August, Singh unveiled an affirmative-action plan that called for 27 percent of public-sector jobs to be set aside for the lower castes. Some Hindus claimed that Singh was shamelessly pandering to the lower-caste vote. Brahmin university students protested by immolating themselves. Riots broke out in the capital. (It's rare now to see a public bus with glass in its windows.)

Lower-caste Indians make up 80 percent of a population of 836 million people. Caste prejudice colors even small domestic scenes. The grandmother of a Brahmin family in Delhi announced one day that she couldn't bathe because the lower-caste sweeper had touched the spigot in the bathroom. Singh and the Mandal Commission had a lot to work against.

As for Singh's successor, Chandra Shekhar, Delhiites dismissed him and his minority government of renegade Janata Dal party members as opportunists, with no real interest in or aptitude for settling the country's crises. Shekhar, whose politics veered far into socialism, seemed to agree: He resigned in March after only four months in office, leading to speculation that Rajiv Gandhi and his Congress (I) Party would make a comeback in May. Though not a majority, the Congress (I) is still the largest single party in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament. I even heard a few people say that they expected Singh to make a reappearance. Despite the antagonism the Mandal Commission generated, Singh was back on the campaign trail this spring, still hop-

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ing to turn his lower-caste support into success at the polls.

"Kill V.P. Stop AIDS" screamed some graffiti in Agra. In Delhi, at the grand and gaudy house of an obscenely (some said illegally) wealthy arms contractor, the debate raged through his three living rooms and shook the fashionable artwork on the wall (modernist paintings set in windowframes from a maharajah's palace). The paunchy host, looking like a colonial planter in white linen slacks and white shirt, stood up at the end of the meal and shouted down a Singh supporter. "I've suffered under that man," he screamed. "He and his cronies should be taken out and shot." His wife agreed, comparing Singh to Hitler.

The couple hoped for a return to power of the Gandhi dynasty, under which the belligerent arms salesman had done rather well. When one of the domestics didn't serve the lychee nuts properly, the hostess turned to us and said, "They do it on purpose, you know —just to annoy one." She might have been summing up her husband's feelings about Singh.

Indians' sentiments about politicians seem generally to run along the lines of that same "it's so hard to get good help these days" theme. The talk only generates more talk. These discussions suit the broad, planned avenues of a capital city that still bears the stamp of the British. Political debate goes from circle to circle, just as Delhi's wide streets do. Watching the round-bellied politicians trying to look populist in homespun clothes, on their way to drinks and "clients" at five-star hotels, one sees why a certain world-weariness creeps into even the most impassioned discussions in New Delhi.

It's only 124 miles to Agra, but maps don't take into account the very uncartographical obstacles that can make the trip last five hours. The bus creeps past every form of transportation known to subcontinental man. Massive green trucks lumber by with strings of offertory marigolds looped around an image of the driver's favorite deity, who rides shotgun on the dashboard or above the windshield as a sort of insurance policy. Across the back end of each truck someone has politely painted "Horn Please," an invitation that's taken much to heart by passing drivers. A few private cars—heavy old Ambassador sedans and newer, more squashable Japanese clones—weave around all sorts of non-motorized moving objects, from bullock carts to unflappable sacred cows.

The guidebooks don't mention that the town is as well known in India for its mental hospital as it is known abroad for the Taj Mahal. Indians say "Agra" the way Americans say "Bellevue" and the British say "Bedlam." Lately, the town has been the focus of a new sort of bad press. In Agra, as in Ayodhya, Hyderabad, Kanpur, Aligarh and elsewhere, Hindus and Muslims have taken to the streets.

Although 1991 was supposed to be "Visit India Year," last December the situation in Agra deteriorated to the point that the authorities imposed a curfew and even closed the Taj to tourists for a few days, a desperate act in a country hungry for foreign exchange. In Calcutta, a beleaguered Indian Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) officer gave me a glossy brochure on Rajasthan, a still-calm province of deserts and hill-forts in the northwest. When I asked if tourism had fallen off since the communal violence had escalated, he did the side-to-side head roll that in India is the equivalent of a shrug and raised palms in the U.S. "There's still the south," he said, and smiled.

Calcutta, unlike Delhi, has a sense of humor. It's the sort of city that puts the American consulate on a street called Ho Chi Minh Sarani; a city of anarchy, of power failures, of street life crowding past the crumbling remnants of the Raj. Dogs that look as if they're straight out of a George Booth cartoon lie everywhere, oblivious, scratching the occasional flea, yet contented in some strange way as life falls apart around them.

When Westerners think of Calcutta, they think of misery and Mother Teresa. But Indians say that Calcutta is the country's soul. When you look past the dirt and the homeless, legless, miserable, but somehow dignified tenants of the city's sidewalks, you begin to see what they mean. Some of the country's finest writers and filmmakers, its Rabindranath Tagores and Satyajit Rays, hail from Calcutta. Bombay may have its lurid, lucrative "Bombay talkies," three-hour musical extravaganzas that pack theaters throughout Asia, but artists call Calcutta home.

More obvious to Calcutta's daily life, a huge number of bookstores squeeze into whatever space they can find between the ubiquitous paan and betelnut shops and samosa vendors. The bookstores are well-stocked and wonderfully anarchic, having given up on alphabetization so that browsing becomes a necessity. The shelves are lit by candlelight whenever the utility people resort to load shifting.

When the electricity goes off, which it constantly does, people set up individual generators, and the air fills with the machines' hum and fumes. No one seems to mind, though some enjoy blaming the shortages on the incompetence of the Communist government of Bengal, of which Calcutta is the capital. It doesn't help that the Bengali government spars frequently with whatever party happens to be in control in Delhi, which means that sometimes the old British capital gets shortchanged by its successor.

Though they have more immediate things to think about, Calcuttans haven't forgotten the British presence. Vestiges of empire still cling to the crumbling Victorian facade of the red-brick Writers' Building, once the nerve center of the Raj bureaucracy. ("Writer" was a Raj euphemism for "bureaucrat.") ITDC buses still take tourists around the Raj buildings, last stop on the tour being the gaudy Victoria Memorial. Built out of white marble, with a central dome and a tower at each of its four corners, it was unfortunately billed as the British answer to the Taj Mahal. Outside, a jowly and very unflattering statue of an old Queen Victoria sits scowling out at the Maidan, the central public park in the city. Inside, visitors (mostly Indian) stroll past glass cases containing letters from Imperial viceroys to native princes. No one stays very long.

In Calcutta, as in Delhi, the British Imperial past becomes either backdrop or tourist attraction, and people are too busy talking, selling, and begging to pay it much mind. Early in the morning, groups of men of all castes stand on Calcutta's streetcorners arguing over the day's first newspapers. Any evening in Delhi, the politicians and businessmen gather for their own heated discussion. Somewhere between the sidewalks of Calcutta and the dinner parties of Delhi, Indians will have to find a way to translate that debating spirit into positive action, to take the teeth out of communalism before it tears the country's communities apart. With Rajiv Gandhi's death they lost the last powerful member of a dynasty that spoke for a united, secular India. Chandra Shekhar's successor faces a distinctly unenviable job. □

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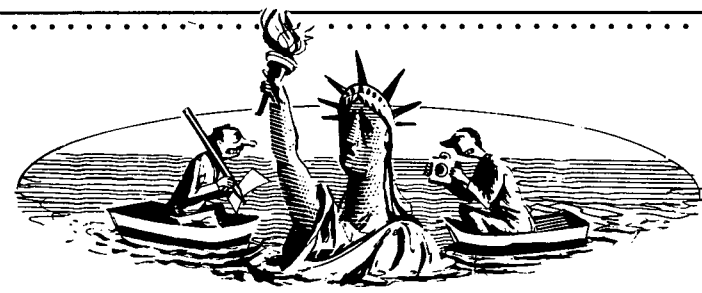

AGAINST HER WILL

by Terry Eastland

Should the media name the accuser when the crime being charged is rape? No—unless she consents to her identification—was the policy followed by all news organizations above the level of the man-eats-trailer-truck *Globe* until April 16. On that day, NBC News, acting as arrogantly as the most activist court, named and showed a photograph of the woman who has accused William Kennedy Smith (or William K. Smith, as the *New York Times* protectively puts it) of raping her on the Kennedy compound in Palm Beach. Smith, the scion of the late Stephen Smith and nephew of the Senator of Chappaquiddick fame, does not deny having sex with her; whether she consented is an outstanding question in the criminal case now pending against Smith. It is not outstanding in the case of NBC's journalism: she was named *without* her consent.

The next morning the woman awoke to learn that the *New York Times* had also identified her. Michael Gartner, president of NBC and the de facto Chief Justice of American journalism in this case, had at least offered some arguments for what NBC had done; the *Times*, once the nation's most prestigious newspaper, simply played the role of a toddler imitating the bad example of an older brother, commenting: "NBC's nationwide broadcast took the matter of privacy out of [our] hands." Editors at the *Times* expected other national news organizations to follow suit, but fortunately for the Palm Beach woman, not to mention victims of rape everywhere, only one—Reuters—did so.

Media policies of not naming the rape victim's name have had various justifications. Earlier in this century it was common to maintain that, dishonor and defilement being the victim's lot, naming the woman would cruelly add to her shame. Over the past two decades, most news organizations have held that naming a rape victim would violate her privacy. Most agree with women's groups and law enforcement officials that naming names would discourage rape victims from notifying authorities of the crime, said to be the most underreported in the nation.

Few news organizations have cast these policies in stone. Most would probably break them to identify, say, a well-known woman who accuses her husband of rape. But most cases are not like that. In practice, the policy against naming names has been followed as a hard-and-fast rule. It has held firm even though (1) journalists generally do not print anonymous criminal accusations, (2) they generally feel obliged to print what they know as soon as they can; and (3) they have been advised by a new school of feminists that identifying rape victims will somehow help overcome the unfair stigma long associated with rape.

From time to time, major newspapers have been moved by one or more of these considerations to print the name of a woman alleging rape, although none, until April 1991, had ever done so without the woman's consent. Knight-Ridder's Carl Cannon, when a police reporter in 1979 for the *San Diego Union*, wrote a front-page feature (with photo) identifying a woman who had been brutally gang-raped and repeatedly shot; she was paralyzed, a quadriplegic. For various reasons Cannon thought her story should be told with her name in it. Following consultation with family, friends, and hospital counselors, she agreed. But Cannon says, "I would never have identified her without her consent. I wouldn't have wanted to heap any more trauma upon her."

The policy is one of journalistic deference: to the unique character of the crime, to law enforcement concerns, and, most of all, to the rape victims themselves. Of course, deference is, among other things, what's wrong with the policy, in Justice Gartner's view.

Michael Gartner attended the annual meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors held in Boston the week before his network identified the Palm Beach woman alleging rape. Gartner also happens to be editor of a small Iowa newspaper. He once worked for the *Wall Street Journal*, and was editor of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and the *Des Moines Register*, which in early April won a Pulitzer Prize for articles in which a rape victim who described her ordeal was identified—at her request. With the Palm Beach story in mind, the editors in Boston debated whether or not the woman should be identified in media accounts, and, more generally, whether their long-standing policies against naming names should be changed. "Some editors," reported Alex S. Jones, a media writer for the *New York Times*, "said the Palm Beach case was a suitable moment to break the taboo." Which editors? Among others, editors at Gartner's old papers, Geneva Overholser of the *Des Moines Register* and Irene Nolan of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*. No editor in Boston wanted to be the first, however, to identify the woman. No editor, that is, but the editor-television executive Gartner.

Gartner has the air of a man who thinks himself extra-special. Does he regard himself as better than mere editors because he has crossed over into the high-salaried executive suites of television; and better than his colleagues in picture-land because he still writes op-eds and book reviews? Gartner, a First Amendment absolutist of liberal political views, acts like a man bent on using his national seat at NBC to change the face of American journalism. It comes as no surprise that his former papers in Des Moines and Louisville also printed the Palm Beach woman's name once he directed NBC to "break the taboo."

In a memo to his staff, later reprinted in *USA Today*, Gartner listed four reasons why "journalistically it is usually right to name rape victims": (1) the news media is "in the business of disseminating news, not suppressing it," and names add credibility, round out the story, and give the viewer or reader the information needed to understand the

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issues; (2) producers and editors should cede no decision to anyone, not even a rape victim; (3) by not naming rape victims the media are part of "a conspiracy of silence" that reinforces the idea that somehow there is something shameful about being raped; and (4) it's not fair to name the accused but not the accuser. This last argument has force, but can also serve as an argument for *less* disclosure: withholding the names of both the accused *and* the accuser.

Gartner's first argument didn't apply in the case at hand. The NBC story was about whether the media should name rape victims, not about the Palm Beach case as such. Naming the woman didn't do much to help the viewer to, as Gartner said, "make up his or her own mind about what's going on." The nature of the broadcast suggests that Gartner was more interested in setting a precedent—in making new law, so to speak—than in reporting news; it's worth noting that not until three weeks later, when William Kennedy Smith was actually charged, did NBC run another piece involving the Palm Beach incident. And in general, it's not true that you have to name a woman in order to know about a rape case. Consider the case of the Central Park jogger, which the media, largely sticking to the no-name policy, reported in depth and detail.

Gartner's second argument, about editorial decision-making, reveals what really bothers him. "In no other category of news do we give the newsmaker the option of being named." Gartner wants "the option" all to himself. He does not want the media to voluntarily give away its "right" to decide. His third argument shows why. He wants to name names, as he puts it, to "destroy incorrect impressions and stereotypes." Gartner buys the view recently advanced by some feminists that publicity will usher in a new era in which rape victims feel no shame.

Here we reach the heart of Justice Gartner's activist opinion. Not content to defer to the judgments of individual rape victims, Gartner thinks he knows better than they—or at least knows what's best for society in general. Like many judges, he is anxious to use his discretion to further his own policy, even if the short-term consequences, as he told *Newsweek*, will be "extraordinarily difficult for this generation." That 91 percent of the American public disagree with him, according to a *USA Today* poll, is beside the point; his good deed "may perhaps help [our] daughters and granddaughters." The fact that Gartner has a national position is not irrelevant to his purposes; NBC ain't Des Moines or Louisville, and once a rape victim appears on his screen, any doctrine of federalism is, for practical purposes, undermined. The Palm Beach woman cannot move to a new place confident she will not be recognized; she's been everywhere, thanks to Justice Gartner of NBC.

To identify a rape victim only with her consent is plainly the wiser course because it does not set the news business above the rest of society; it does not impute superior knowledge or competence to the media. Moreover, it does not discourage women from reporting rapes. Rapists are the most likely beneficiaries of the Gartner policy.

Another benefit of the no-names policy is that it does not plunge editors and producers into the kind of "balancing" inquiries that have long vexed judges, leading to indeterminate law and lack of respect for the courts. Gartner said, announcing network policy: "We will consider the naming of rape victims or alleged rape victims on a case-by-case basis." Those were the words of a man willing to balance all factors he thinks relevant. In the Palm Beach case, the celebrity of the Kennedy family clearly influenced both NBC and the *New York Times*. First Amendment pieties aside, the case-by-case approach to naming rape victims' names could become a policy of naming names only when nationally known figures stand to be accused. And what would be the impact of that? After a while, no celebrity or politician or anyone well known to the national media might be accused of rape, though such people may indeed have committed it. The Palm Beach woman reportedly would not have notified the police if she had known her name would be broadcast nationwide.

The *New York Times* deserves contempt for piggybacking on NBC instead of offering any arguments—even bad arguments—for identifying the Palm Beach woman. That the *Times* should have proceeded in such a fashion is surprising. Or is it? On April 7, the newspaper ran a front-page piece by Maureen Dowd detailing many of the sensational stories about Nancy Reagan in Kitty Kelley's book without trying to assess either their truth or the author's credibility. Editor Max Frankel later admitted the article "did not live up to our standards."

In regard to the *Times*'s decision to name the Palm Beach woman, the because-they-did-it-we'll-do-it-too was a poor excuse for thought; Leonard Downie, Jr., managing editor of the *Washington Post*, had no trouble instantly articulating the conclusion the *Times* should have drawn, even if after a thousand editorial sessions: "We don't see any reason to change our policy in this case just because other people have named her."

Identifying the woman wasn't even the worst the *Times* did, as it turned out; the 34-inch story left the unmistakable impression of a woman who liked to party and probably asked for whatever she got from William Kennedy Smith. She had "a little wild streak," one anonymous source told the *Times*, whose reporters made like peeping Toms to report the books on the shelves of the woman's two-year-old daughter, a child born out of wedlock.

What the *Times* did was more damaging than NBC's report because a network newscast is not nearly as easily retrievable as a newspaper story; the Palm Beach woman will always be in the Nexis database of every journalist and lawyer in the country. Her only consolation lies in the hope that it will be referred to by students of journalism looking for examples of media malpractice. Perhaps as a result of the widespread criticism generated by its action—including a meeting of 300 staffers with the paper's editors—the *Times* has since published an apology of sorts:

> The article should have explicitly asserted that nothing in the woman's known background could resolve the disputed testimony about her encounter with Mr. Smith. The Times regrets its failure to include such a clear statement of the article's limits and intent.

Starting in early May, the newspaper's stories on the Palm Beach incident, including a lengthy profile of William Kennedy Smith, did *not* refer to his accuser by name. A spokesman for the *Times* told me the failure to identify her by name did not suggest a change in the policy, that naming the names of rape victims will continue to be done on a "case-by-case basis" in terms of whether it's "necessary and appropriate for that story."

Who'da thunk I'd ever end a column by praising the *National Enquirer*, but the tabloid did not follow the lead of NBC and the *Times* and print the alleged victim's name: "It never really entered our minds to print it without her permission," said executive editor Dan Schwartz. Imagine the reforms Schwartz and company could bring to the good, gray *New York Times*. □

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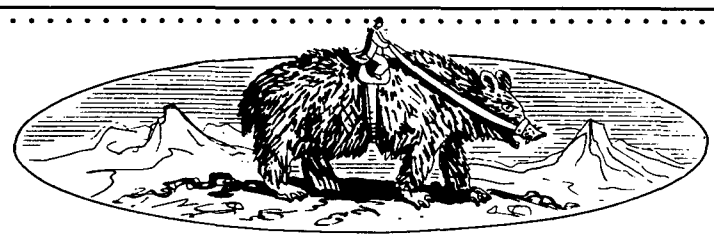

THE GORBY CLUB

by Cathy Young

The beleaguered Mikhail Gorbachev has a fan club—and no, its president is not Stephen F. Cohen. An interview with the general director of the Klub Gorbi, as the Moscow-based organization is known, appeared on March 25 in the Moscow weekly *Stolitsa* ("The Capital"). Ilya M. Osadchuk says he became a Gorby fan in 1984, when Gorbachev was made the youngest member of the Politburo. Around that time, he happened to lay eyes on Raisa Gorbachev's now-famous doctoral dissertation on the sorry state of the Soviet village. Fired with enthusiasm, Osadchuk headed for Gorbachev's birthplace, where he discovered that young Misha had been a born leader who often led older boys in raids on fruit orchards. In 1986, he decided to start a club in support of his pin-up boy's new ideas. Strangely, his plan did not meet with official support (perhaps because he had never been a party member) and the club did not open until the spring of 1990, when, Osadchuk says regretfully, Gorby's best days were over.

But Osadchuk's troubles were not. A Communist functionary was appointed to oversee the club's work, and its "best ideas" were being stolen by the establishment. Osadchuk was so aggrieved he handed in his resignation—but history intervened. "The Baltic crisis began, and the club's board of directors scattered. I haven't been able to find anyone since January. It's not respectable and even dangerous to be a Gorbachev supporter these days. So there are now four people left in the club. Just like the Beatles: a Lonely Hearts Club Band."

While he is upset by Gorbachev's recent tendency to appoint hardliners to key posts, Osadchuk insists that this is nothing more than strategy, and blames the democrats who chose to follow Yeltsin, leaving poor Gorby all alone to fight the KGB and the generals. Meanwhile, he fears that if dictatorship comes, he will be jailed or shot: "I have become a hostage to Gorbachev's ideas even more than Gorbachev himself. And I have not gotten anything out of it for myself—no car, no country home, no apartment." He has never even met his idol.

Score Two for Freedom of the Press . . . Osadchuk's reverence for the Soviet president does not prevent him from collecting Gorby cartoons, and he can now add an exotic new item to his files. The April 22 edition of *Kommersant* reports that on April 16, one Galina Egorenkova was detained outside a metro station for selling copies of the Riga-based "erotic gazette" *Eshcho* ("More"). It featured, among other things, a collage that showed Gorbachev watching a couple in sexual congress, while a nearby headline read "Profession: Pimp." The lady was hauled into court on charges of distributing pornography and insulting the president. On April 18, she was found innocent on all counts: the newspaper had been properly registered, and the headline, it seems, referred not to the collage but to the profile of an actual pimp on the same page.

Striking another blow for press freedom, the Soviet Journalists' Union has finally expelled the infamous radio and television chief Leonid Kravchenko. The decision was made by the secretariat of the Moscow section of the Journalists' Union in Kravchenko's absence (which apparently can be done in certain cases), prompting an outburst of angry accusations from *Pravda* and *Sem Dnei* ("Seven Days"), the TV and radio guide published by the State Broadcasting Company. The editorial in *Sem Dnei* characterized the action as "reprisals against a journalist for taking a stand, for defending his professional and personal principles." Which, apparently, include silencing those whose "principles" are different. Letters from veteran Soviet journalists in the same issue accuse the Journalists' Union of "intolerance" and "suppressing dissent," which surely ought to be brought to the attention of the organization that hands out those annual doublespeak awards.

. . . And One for Cold War Propaganda

A sample of Kravchenko's recent fare is provided by an April 5 TV special whose very title, "Alien Voices," is rather ominously reminiscent of the bad old times, the "alien voice" being Radio Liberty. The program, made by and starring one Oleg Tumanov—a KGB mole in the Munich office of Radio Liberty who became head of the Russian service before his spectacular defection to the Motherland in the early 1980s—was broadcast right after *Vremya*, pushing back a scheduled "Soccer Revue." It opened with the assertion that "since 1988, jamming of Radio Liberty has been virtually stopped."

Journalist Vladimir Voina, who dissected the film in the April 13 issue of *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* ("Independent Gazette"), wonders just what "virtually" could mean, adding that more sophisticated interference methods had reappeared lately in place of the crude static din of old: the Liberty signal sometimes fades, and sometimes gets crowded out by other frequencies or music of mysterious origin. "Alien Voices," however, seems to have been only slightly more sophisticated than its Cold War–era forerunners. Radio Liberty was described as a tool of the CIA. (So what, says Voina: it was one of the precious few sources from which Soviet people could learn the truth about their society—and who cares where the money came from? And, he adds, what about the cozy relationship between Gosteleradio and the KGB?) On a more threatening note, it was said that the Soviet miners' strike committees were getting their instructions straight from RL broadcasts—that is to say, from the CIA via RL.

RL was also accused of helping the CIA study the causes and manifestations of discontent in the Soviet Union, fomenting ethnic violence, and recruiting Soviet citizens abroad as CIA spies. On the latter point, Voina writes, not

Cathy Young is the author of Growing Up in Moscow *(Ticknor & Fields).*

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without a shade of regret, that when he was in Germany last summer and freelanced for RL, "no one was tempted to buy my immortal soul." Nor did anyone try to recruit him during a ten-month stay in America. "I even began to suspect," writes Voina, "that one has to try really hard to become a paid agent of the CIA. After all, its budget is not unlimited, and there are plenty of takers."

"Alien Voices" concluded with Tumanov opining that "if the American government were to show its good will, Radio Liberty would cease to exist." What better evidence that the "good will" of the American government should be put on hold?

NRA Communists

The confusion between the terms "left" and "right," or "conservative" and "liberal," as used in the Soviet Union and in the West, has generated much awkwardness. Only recently, Gorbachev gleefully pointed out that the people who were calling themselves "left-wing" in Russia were really "right-wing," since it is generally the right that stands for private property and free enterprise. And American conservatives are sometimes understandably rattled when the C-word is used as a label for hardline Marxists like Yegor Ligachev. Charles Krauthammer has even suggested that the habit of calling such folks "conservatives" and their pro-capitalist opponents "liberals" was some sort of plot by our left-liberals to claim the good guys for themselves. With all due respect, that's how the terms are used by the Russians themselves.

But a more interesting and somewhat touchy question is whether there are any areas of agreement between Soviet and American conservatives. It is only natural that there should be: once the Soviet system had become established, its champions had to espouse *some* policies needed to preserve social stability, such as strong families. Today, Soviet conservatives—whether of a Communist or nationalist bent—are the prime guardians of old-fashioned sexual morality. They also favor a tough stand on criminals, while the "liberals" tend to oppose the death penalty. Most recently, two items caught my eye in the leading "conservative" newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya*.

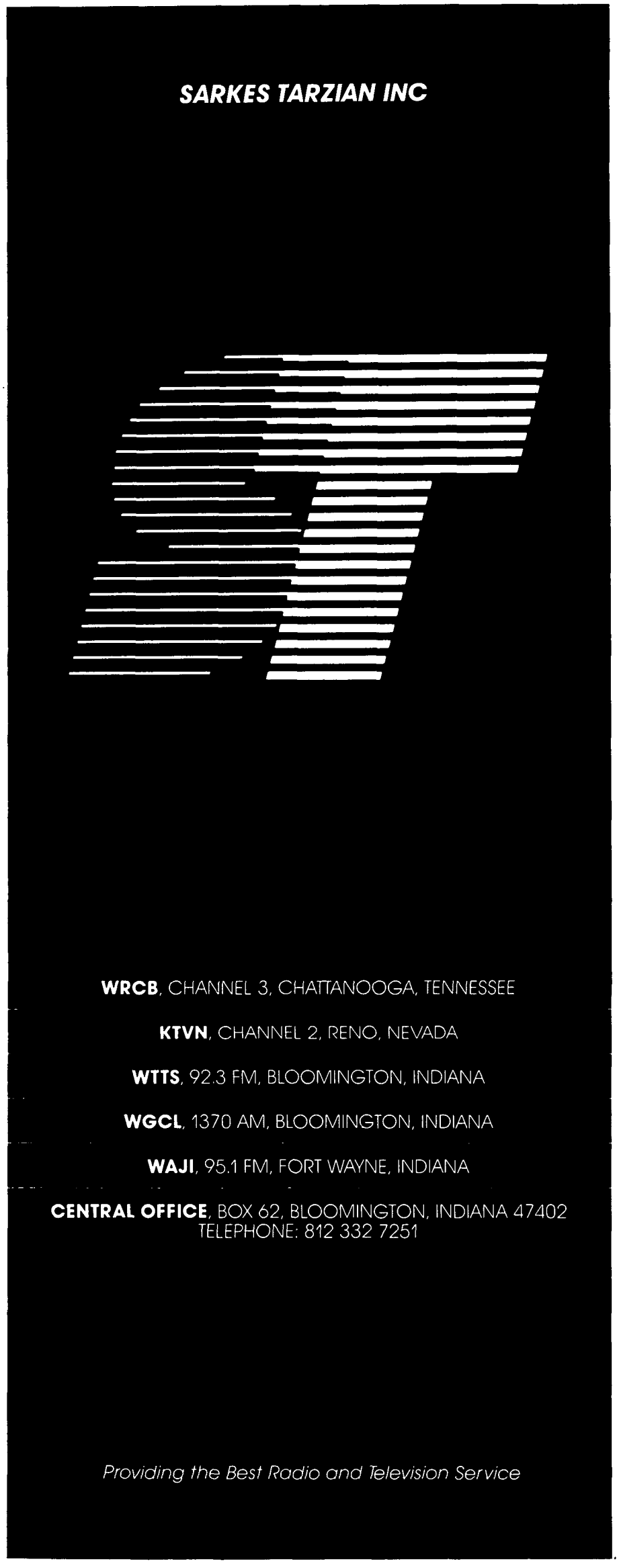
One (April 25) was an article by N. Lukyanova entitled "Victims of Demagoguery: What the 'Liberalization' of Our Psychiatry Has Wrought." The writer asserts that after the 1988 relaxation of rules that allowed psychiatric patients to be treated without their consent, it has become difficult to hospitalize or treat the truly insane. She cites cases of newly discharged patients who harmed or killed others, and quotes psychiatrists who complain about assertive patients refusing treatment and dangerous people being turned loose.

There's no blatant nostalgia here for the good old days when psychos and dissidents alike were packed off to the loony bin; Lukyanova is either too progressive or too subtle for that. She not only acknowledges past political abuses of psychiatry (claiming, however, that they only affected a tiny fraction of patients) but admits that under the strict old rules, people suffering from nothing more than a mild temporary neurosis often found themselves caught in wheels of the psychiatric machine. Lukyanova seems merely to argue for a rational middle ground: "It makes no sense for an aggressive paranoid and a quiet kleptomaniac to have equal opportunities to run their own lives. . . . 'Humanitarianism' in psychiatric matters, taken to an absurd extreme, has contributed to the fact that we have more destitute people lacking care: those who beg on public transport or in pedestrian underpasses are often former patients of mental hospitals. Granted formal rights to an independent life, they cannot, in fact, make use of them. . . . Under the guise of civil rights, such people have been deprived of the right to health."

Since respectful references to all things American are now in vogue, Lukyanova points to the mental patients' rights movement in the United States and the human tragedy of deinstitutionalization. On the other hand, she commends Americans for their more compassionate and accepting attitude toward the mentally ill, noting that in the Soviet Union, "a person under psychiatric observation is still seen as an outcast" and mental hospitals resemble prisons.

An appropriate companion piece is "Weapons Against Fear" by S. Karkhanin (April 30), which deals with letters in response to a January 16 article, "How to Save Yourself From a Criminal," written, no less, by a special investigator in the office of the Prosecutor General of the USSR. The investigator, Leonid Proshkin, advocated private ownership of handguns for self-defense. Not one of the letters unequivocally opposed the idea, and many endorsed it. The consensus, writes Karkhanin, was that "weapons are circulating all over the country anyway and fall into the hands of criminals, while decent people have no way of resisting them."

Proshkin is currently wrapping up the case of an armed gang that broke into apartments, forcing people to give up their valuables and committing an occasional murder: "They left empty-handed on just three occasions, when they encountered armed resistance." The investigator concludes that if more citizens were armed, some criminals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would be deterred. Moreover, he finds that to comply meekly with a criminal's demands—the advice routinely given now in the Soviet press—is degrading to human dignity: "I don't know how a family can go on after the wife was raped by hoodlums in front of her husband while he, at the point of a gun, could not do anything to help." Karkhanin adds that there are already some projects to manufacture tranquilizer guns as well as short-range, small-caliber weapons especially suited for self-defense: "The prospect of seeing a handgun in a shop no longer seems fantastic."

It is useful to keep in mind at this point that *Sovetskaya Rossiya* is the paper that always upbraids Yeltsin for trying to lead Russia to capitalism, attacks the democrats, and praises individuals like Kravchenko and Alexander Nevzorov (of Vilnius infamy). It has an agenda—one that can be glimpsed through the civilized rhetoric of these two articles. Lukyanova's piece (regardless of the writer's intent) is grist for the mill of those who deplore not only freedom for the insane but freedom for the sane as well. And it is quite likely that the real motive of the Karkhanin piece is not to provide ad copy for the National Rifle Association, or to make Russians safer from criminals, but to whip up more panic about the recent crime wave, seen as a result of economic and social liberalization. Indeed, Karkhanin explicitly states—citing the rise of crime in post-reunification Germany—that the transition to the market, with attendant unemployment and consumerist temptations, will be accompanied by more violence. His ostensible conclusion is that people will need guns to protect themselves. But could it be that what *Sovetskaya Rossiya* really wants is to make people wonder whether capitalism is worth it? Yes, it could. □

THE TALKIES

PARDON ME, MYTH

by James Bowman

Being a man in anything other than a splatter flick these days ain't nowhere, man; it's the girls who have all the fun. At least they do in The Myth—by which I mean Hollywood's continual retelling of what it assumes is a paradigmatic tale for our times. It hath been otherwise, twenty times better, for us guys. In the late sixties, you had to be young and male to be taken seriously, even to be fully human, in the myth-makers lens; in the nineties, you have to be of youngish middle age and female. Now, as then, it is taken for granted that the human beings will be tough yet sensitive, will suffer and be misunderstood, and will have to fight against those who abuse or oppress or patronize them.

A caricature like *Sleeping with the Enemy* gives us our clearest look at The Myth in its present form. That film is to the Tough Woman myth what *The Graduate* was to the sixties youth myth. Today the principal runs away from instead of into marriage, but both films are moralistic versions of their respective myths, just as *High Noon* was the moralistic version of the fifties myth of the man-who-stands-alone. But moralism gives way to romanticism and the starkness of individual moral choice diffuses into companionship in adventure in films like *The Magnificent Seven* or *Easy Rider*. Now it is time for the romantic version of the Tough Woman myth. Ridley Scott's *Thelma and Louise* is the *Easy Rider* of the nineties.

Each is a combination of buddy movie and road movie and each ends with the moment at which the friendship and the road come to an end together in a violent apotheosis. What keeps the girls (Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon, who is becoming so closely identified with it that she may one day be the Doris Day of this superseded myth) on the road is not drugs but male sex-violence; but their object is still the kind of self-realization that comes from breaking ties to conformity and respectability—those constant enemies of the heroes of so many different kinds of myths over the years.

Of course one expects poor old C and R to be caricatured, as they are here in Geena Davis's brutish and idiotic husband, Daryl (Christopher MacDonald), yet *Thelma* is actually quite a good movie. As, indeed, *Easy Rider* was—although in both cases, if your political consciousness is more highly developed than your artistic, you will find them difficult to watch without feelings of annoyance. Scott gives us more subtlety than we are used to in this kind of movie, as well as some beauty and quite a lot of humor.

Even the woman's point of view is well done. The movie evokes for us the attractive yet threatening nighttime world of bars and truck stops and motels and gas stations, as well as the uncertainty and fear of the woman alone in it who has to decide whom she can trust. Scott's male characters retain their moral opacity for long enough to make us share in the women's feelings of tentativeness. And it is appropriate that the most personable of them turn out to be the most treacherous and the roughest-looking the most reliable.

Female buddies teaming up against swinish males is also the theme of *Mortal Thoughts* by Alan Rudolph. Here there is some excellent acting from Demi Moore, Glenne Headly, and Bruce Willis, and Harvey Keitel plays a New Jersey version of the rough-hewn Arkansas cop with a sympathy for murderous women that he portrays in *Thelma and Louise*. But *Thoughts* is marred by its uneasy combination of character study and whodunit. Because the whole story is narrated in flashback, the true nature of the bond between the women is withheld to the end, along with the identity of the murderer. By that time it is too late for us to make sense of it, and we are left in the dark as to how much retrospective credence is to be given to the version of events we have seen only through the eyes of a tainted source.

Typically in these latest retellings of The Myth, women deal with male sexual abuse by killing the men, so it is unremarkable that another disposable man

James Bowman, TAS's movie critic, is American editor of the Times Literary Supplement.

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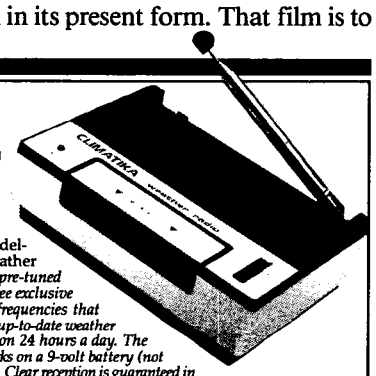

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is blown away in order to set up what purports to be a comic situation in Blake Edwards's *Switch*. This time the male sex-tyrant gets his comeuppance not by getting killed, which anywhere but in the movies might seem like punishment enough, but by coming back to life as Ellen Barkin. Some punishment! It is really the audience which is made to suffer. Miss Barkin pretending to trip over her high heels is barely worth a smile the first time, and is worth something more than a grimace by the fourteenth.

Here is a film that has nothing going for it except its fidelity to The Myth, for it says the right thing, in its terms, about sexual identity—i.e., that it is merely accidental and irrelevant to anything except childbearing (and maybe not even that).

Exhibit A for the other side in this argument is Madonna. The documentary made by Alek Keshishian on her "Blond Ambition" tour, *Truth or Dare*, is another look at the Tough Woman—one who challenges the male tendencies to aggression and domination that the other redactors of The Myth are so afraid of. Try to get through this chick's defenses, baby! She'll eat you alive—not in spite of but because of the fact that she is all woman.

Instead of de-emphasizing it, Madonna glories in her femininity, buckling it into pretty, shell-like armor that at once shows off her sexual attributes and renders her sexually impermeable except on her own terms. For her, masturbation is not so much coy synecdoche as it is a natural expression of her narcissistic and self-regarding sexuality. Only Madonna is a worthy sexual partner for Madonna. Poor Warren Beatty sits disgruntled in a corner making sour comments about her exhibitionism and looking scarcely less emasculated than the homosexual dancers who delight in her domination of them on stage and off. What would Dick Tracy have said?

Not that Beatty is wrong when he says that she doesn't want to live off camera. He just misses the point. She *can't* live off camera, not as Madonna anyway, because it is the camera and the watching crowds which have made her what she is: the premiere exponent of public sexuality. Take away the public and she is just a woman, as vulnerable as Geena Davis in the truck-stop parking lot of *Thelma and Louise*. That is why Keshishian's documentary fails. He attempts to cordon off The Madonna Show from "real life" by switching back and forth between color and grainy black and white, but it swiftly becomes apparent that real life is part of The Madonna Show too—and an inferior part.

Ultimately he falls victim to the *Chorus Line* fallacy: that behind the glitz of the show there are real people with a claim on our interest and attention. In fact, the real people are unfailingly boring and predictable by contrast with the glitz. That is why people have to pay to watch them perform and why they have to pay people to listen to them maunder on about their personal problems. Madonna on stage is truly exciting; Madonna bringing her personal life before the cameras is tediously manipulative if sublimely unconscious of the fact.

Sometimes this is funny, as when she declares that money, rather than earrings, makes people beautiful, or when she tells her father to wait outside while she is dressing and then not only allows the camera into the dressing room but bares her breasts in front of it. She tells us more than we want to know about her sexual experiences and then shuts the door on the cameraman when she is discussing business. Such moments are worth waiting for, but they are not enough to make this a good movie, except for the parts of it that are filmed onstage.

The sentimental religiosity of Madonna's regular pre-show prayer session (she takes the gum out of her mouth for the paying customers but not for God) is nothing next to her sanctimoniousness about Art. "I'm an artist," she says, "and this is how I choose to express myself." For her this status as Artist is a kind of diploma conferring special privileges upon the bearer.

Something of the same attitude is to be found in James Lapine's *Impromptu*, which is not as good as the smashing performance of Judy Davis as George Sand should have made it. Here is our contemporary Tough Woman transplanted to the nineteenth century in a way that might make the period come alive again—if it weren't for all that phoniness about Art.

That this film also purports to be about "real people" only accentuates the phoniness to my ear. Like the artistically pretentious country bumpkins who get taught a lesson by their awfulness, we are ready to say by the end that we "should not grieve if we never saw an artist again." Hugh Grant as Chopin has some manners, but the artistic license by which the others eschew them has to be granted by us on trust merely because this pack of boors and fops happen to bear famous names. Maybe the artists of the nineteenth century really behaved like this, but that is just another reason to avoid the real people and concentrate on their art instead.

There are too many ways in which costume dramas such as this one are, like Keshishian's Madonna, continually tugging at the clothesline from which our disbelief is suspended. Even the exquisite Judy Davis's ecstatic writhings to Chopin's music look almost as fake as Madonna's visiting her mother's grave: not because Chopin's music isn't wonderful or Madonna didn't really love her mother, but because the truth of real feelings about real events is to some extent compromised when they are used as means to a dramatic end. Chopin's music alone and unaided convinces us of the greatness of Chopin; it is merely trivialized by such a pantomime accompaniment.

If it is not possible to convey the greatness of one art in terms of another, my Film of the Month comes pretty close. Unfortunately, Michael Lindsay-Hogg's *Object of Beauty* will probably be gone from your neighborhood cinema by the time you read this. It already is from mine. But see it if you can. It is a serious meditation on the complex relations between art and love and money which is also a moving story of trust and betrayal and a human beauty which puts that of art in its proper place.

An American couple (John Malkovich and Andie MacDowell) staying in a posh London hotel run out of money and contemplate selling their one asset, a small bronze figure by Henry Moore. She doesn't want to sell it, he does. "It's beautiful and all that crap," he says, but "I'll get you another one. I'll get you two." Before they can decide what to do, the figure is stolen by a deaf and dumb chambermaid (Rudi Davies) who lives in a squalid flat with her punk brother. Each of the Americans thinks that the other has faked the theft for the insurance and suspicion and mistrust grow between them.

Only the poor chambermaid sees the statuette as art, and she must give it up to protect her brother. To me her scribbled explanation of the theft—"Because it spoke and I heard it"—is too pat, but otherwise the counterpoint between her and her brother and the American couple is nicely done: the poor are not romanticized and the rich are not simply corrupt. Above all, the film doesn't pretend, as both *Truth or Dare* and *Impromptu* do, that Art is playing around and having fun and being outrageous. In *Object of Beauty*, as in the *real* real world, far removed from Hollywood myth-making, it has a price which few if any are willing to pay—except in superfluous dollars and cents. □

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BOOK REVIEWS

PRESIDENT REAGAN: THE ROLE OF A LIFETIME
Lou Cannon/Simon and Schuster/948 pp. $24.95

REVOLUTION: THE REAGAN LEGACY
Martin Anderson/Hoover Press/500 pp. $11.95 (paper)

Robert D. Novak

The good fortune that Ronald Reagan enjoyed throughout his remarkable career failed him when Lou Cannon emerged as his Boswell. Cannon, a veteran journalist who covered the Reagan White House for the *Washington Post*, is certainly a skilled and diligent reporter. But for someone who has devoted most of his professional life to Reaganology, he winds up echoing the platitudes and conventional wisdom you can hear from any member of the liberal news media.

This is Cannon's third and presumably final book about Reagan, a far-too-long account of his presidency that concentrates on what it regards as one fiasco after another. If you had gone into a coma the night Reagan was elected in 1980 and awakened to read *The Role of a Lifetime*, you would be convinced that here was another failed President. You'd have no clue that Reagan was the most successful chief executive since Franklin Roosevelt and someone who perhaps changed the course of world history.

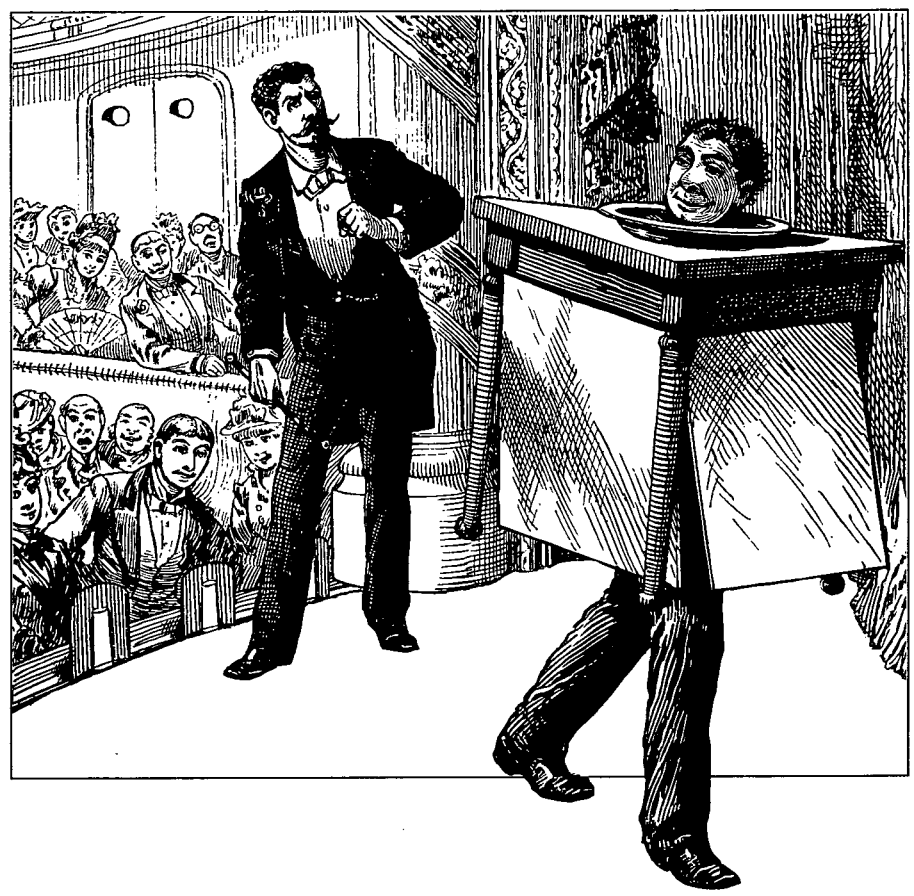
"Too often," Cannon writes in establishing his familiar theme, "Reagan was a performer and presidential leadership an empty shell." His administration was characterized by "naiveté, ignorance and undisciplined internal conflict." His image-makers drew a political caricature that depicted him as "a masterful decisive president, a Reagan who never was." Eight hundred pages of Reagan-bashing later, Cannon settles for another liberal cliché when he pays lip service to Reagan's success in "reviving national confidence, when there was a great need for inspiration." He quickly adds: " . . . because he believed in happy endings obtained with too little sacrifice, this revived confidence became such an end in itself that Reagan rarely sought to focus on high goals. He aged little in the presidency and took his role too lightly in the end. It proved too big for his talents." In other words, Reagan did not work hard enough, and sought the wrong objectives, anyway.

It is remarkable that Cannon's assessment has been labeled even-handed and objective by reviewers, who perhaps worried that a reporter who enjoyed exceptional access to the Reagans for over twenty-five years would wind up producing a gushy account. Cannon unquestionably likes Ronald Reagan as a person. Indeed, who doesn't? But as their relationship nears an end, Cannon finds it easier to identify with the journalistic establishment's reflexive contempt for both the public figure and his principles.

As Cannon moves from one disaster to the next, Reagan's legislative triumphs barely receive mention, while such events as the undeniably inept handling of MX missile deployment are treated at length. Passage of the 1981 tax cut is disposed of in one footnote, while Iran-contra takes up 149 pages. The 1986 tax reform is dismissed, while the Bitburg cemetery incident ("a catastrophe") is described in every detail. Reagan "never would again fully recapture the high moral ground he had sacrificed at Bitburg," just as he "never again would bask in the unquestioned trust of the American people" after Iran-contra ("a greater catastrophe").

Then there is Cannon's assertion that Reagan simply did not perform what should be a President's real job. For pages at a time, he lets on that Reagan was lazy, ignorant, or stupid. "Reagan was always one to leave the work to others whenever he could," Cannon offers. Or: "Not even the most devout of Reagan admirers considered him a hard worker, and even aides who thought he put in enough hours in the Oval Office regarded him as intellectually lazy." Or: "The nation paid a high price for a President who skimped on preparation." Or: "Reagan knew little about how any federal program operated and was largely uninterested in matters of process."

But what about Reagan's tour de force in changing the course of American government and foreign policy? Cannon explains that "it depended totally upon others for all aspects of governance except his core ideas and his powerful performances. In the many areas of the office where ideology did not apply or the performances had no bearing, Reagan was at a loss." Cannon is headed down a blind alley if he means to imply that Reagan's micromanaging Democratic predecessors—Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter—were better leaders, notwithstanding their failed presidencies. But continual nagging over Reagan's inattention to his briefing books obscures what really bothers Cannon: Reagan's ideology. *The Role of a Lifetime* purports to deal with process but in truth is most concerned with agenda.



I know and like Lou Cannon, and am sure that he would pass a lie-detector test proclaiming his ideological neutrality. But he is in bed with the liberal Democrats in journalism and academia who compose the jury now delivering a guilty verdict on the Reagan presidency, supposedly on performance but actually on policy. Had it not been smothered by the simultaneous release of Kitty Kelley's screed on Nancy Reagan (which left Cannon in the unlikely position of having to defend Reagan as a hands-on executive), *The Role of a Lifetime* would be leading the parade in the popular deconstruction of the Reagan presidency.

As it is, Cannon marches in lockstep with his liberal brethren. He complains about Reagan speeches "crammed . . . with gaudy certitudes about democracy and moralistic warnings about the evils of Communism." He blames the contras for forcing the Sandinistas to suppress internal dissent. He says Reagan was wrong in decontrolling oil prices, wrong in talking about the "evil empire," wrong in opposing "traditional deterrence" (mutual assured destruction), wrong in not listing South African terrorists as freedom fighters, and wrong in lacking "even elemental understanding of what private developers would do to irreplaceable national treasures."

Cannon is at one with the Washington establishment's stubborn belief in government, despite the historical record of this century. "Had Reagan cared more about governance," his administration would have had a better ethical record, Cannon writes—forgetting the transgressions of congressmen deeply immersed in government. Part and parcel of his devotion to "governance" is his blind faith in the sanctity of taxes, and so naturally Cannon dismisses the Reagan tax cut as a fiasco and their architect as a credulous fool: "He never ceased believing in the eventual vindication of his economic policies, when [David] Stockman and nearly everyone

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else in the White House had given up on them."

This book, then, reveals why the liberals cannot understand the Reagan presidency. On one level, they are so enamored of Jimmy Carter–style workaholism that they are blind to other methods of leadership, which have a rich historical tradition of their own. But even this obsession pales beside the liberal intelligentsia's implacable hostility to Reagan's ideology, which twists reality in such a way as to make it impossible to appreciate any of his accomplishments. Thus, in the face of prolonged economic growth, Cannon views the Reagan economic record as a failure. He denies the very existence of a Reagan Doctrine and gives the contras no credit at all for the fall of the Sandinista dictatorship. In like fashion, he sees no connection between Reagan's hard-line policies against the Soviet Union and our victories in the Cold War. The view held by Soviet reformers that the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was the father of perestroika is not even entertained.

I wasn't surprised when several Reagan aides praised Cannon's book, both in public and in private, to me. Far worse than the blindness of a Boswell who cannot appreciate his subject is the cheap disloyalty of aides eager to score points in Washington, many of whom are featured throughout this long account. Even Cannon is a bit disturbed by staffers—his sources—who "told stories about presidential lapses that would have invited instant dismissal in other administrations."

Cannon is particularly dependent on the poisonous remarks of two former aides, Mike Deaver and Bud McFarlane, who were totally unsuited for the high positions they held. Ex-White House impresario Deaver, for instance, "believed strongly that Reagan had a dark side to his nature that could be roused by fervent anti-Communism." Ex-national security adviser McFarlane was "often discouraged by the President's inattentiveness and thin grasp of issues." If "inattentiveness" hurt Reagan's presidency, it was in his failure to pick aides whose views conformed to his own.

Reagan gets it coming and going from Cannon. He is blamed for almost everything that went wrong—such as the Lebanon fiasco, which Cannon's own reporting shows to have been a failure on the part of Secretary of State George Shultz. Yet Reagan aides are described as having been "largely responsible for his first-term success"—this in a book that recognizes precious few successes. Cannon probably doesn't recognize his own inconsistency. But he is too good a reporter not to record examples of presidential decisiveness (naturally, over positions Cannon finds deplorable) that contradict the image of an old, lazy, and occasionally addled actor playing a part scripted for him by aides. Thus, we see a President who is adamant about cutting taxes, who refuses to put a ceiling on defense spending, who presses for the zero option in arms negotiations, who says no to Nancy when she first demands Donald Regan's head, who insists on supporting an embattled Helmut Kohl by going to Bitburg, who presses the missiles-for-hostages deal with Iran. Apparently without fully realizing its implications, Cannon cites a memorable incident from Reagan's own memoirs: When at the Reykjavik summit Shultz looked as though his dog had died because the President would not surrender SDI, Reagan told his secretary of state, "The meeting is over. Let's go, George. We're leaving." That's a Hollywood actor playing a role?

Another inconsistency arises when Cannon, who uncritically quotes Reagan aides as they belittle their former boss on page after page, takes issue with one-time domestic policy adviser Martin Anderson because he "attributed to Reagan a greater grasp of issues than he had."

Anderson's *Revolution: The Reagan Legacy* is a partial antidote to the Reagan-bashing books by Cannon, Kitty Kelley, and Haynes Johnson, author of *Sleepwalking Through History*. Originally published in 1989, Anderson's book is now available in an expanded paperback edition that includes a new 29-page opening chapter describing Reagan's take-charge strategy in dealing with the Soviets and his indispensable guiding hand in SDI. "Behind the warm geniality lay a calculating, imaginative mind governed by a steely will," Anderson writes. Reagan developed his Kremlin game plan on his own: "He didn't ask for a lot of advice. He didn't even set up committees." Marty Anderson's Reagan is a breed apart from Lou Cannon's.

Unfortunately, Anderson too often strays from his intention: to establish Reagan's revolutionary place in history. He gets distracted by the petty bureaucratic infighting in which he took part. On his publisher's advice, he devoted some 100 pages, based on secondary sources, to Iran-contra, which he sees as the inevitable by-product of Reagan's management style. Better to have dropped it from the paperback edition.

What Ronald Reagan now needs is a bona fide historian who will stand back from the turmoil of Washington and appreciate what this extraordinary leader accomplished. Anderson's *Revolution* will help that future chronicler, but Cannon's *The Role of a Lifetime* is more likely to confuse him. □

THE COMMANDERS
Bob Woodward/Simon and Schuster/398 pp. $24.95

Victor Gold

When we last heard from Bob Woodward he was interviewing Bill Casey on his deathbed, and if you won't take Woodward's word for it, ask Casey.

Why is it that every book Bob Woodward writes manages to stir up more interest in who-said-it, or whether-it-was-said-at-all, than in what-was-said? Think back. Does anyone remember a single new—really new—revelation about Watergate in *All the President's Men* or *The Final Days*?

All right, one: Nixon asked Kissinger to join him in prayer on the Oval Office rug, just above the official seal. But then again, did he really, and if so, who was Woodward's source? Certainly not Nixon. Kissinger? Possible, but not likely. Deep Throat then. But who *was* Deep Throat—assuming, of course, that he actually exists?

See what I mean? Take *Wired*, Woodward's book about the death of John Belushi. Does anyone remember anything about the text, other than Judy Belushi's calling it a Charmin tissue of lies and quotes-out-of-context? Same story with *The Brethren*, Woodward and Scott Armstrong's expose of the U.S. Supreme Court. Who sourced that one? Justice Marshall—neither the living Thurgood nor the dead John—won't say, and the clerks of the court aren't available for comment.

Who then? The deponent deposeth not. Instead, Woodward gives us that slyer-than-thou smile, Mona Lisa on the fast track, and invokes the First. *Can't reveal my sources, you know. Take me to jail, burn me at the stake, but I'm not talking.* And why should he? The money, if you're Bob Woodward and walk in the holy glow of media celebrity, lies in listening. Penetrating the inner sanctums and getting others to talk.

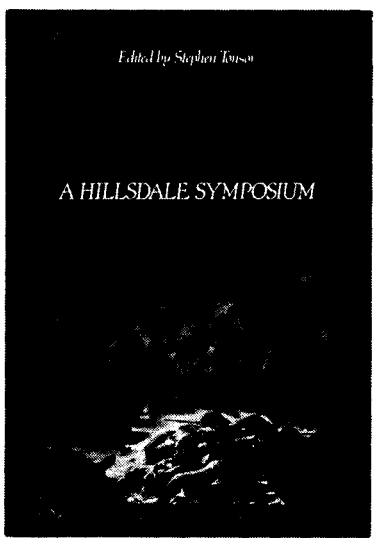
It is Woodward's special gift—and he displays it to advantage once more in *The Commanders*—to be able to persuade people who should know better to open their doors and mouths when he comes calling. Not all people, of course. Richard Nixon hasn't talked to him. Yet. Spiro Agnew hasn't talked to him. Yet. Bill Casey . . .

But why beat that dead horse? Suffice it to say that, with *The Commanders*, Woodward has taken his gift to a new level. It was one thing to get self-aggrandizing White House staffers to blab on their boss, or to get cantankerous judges and their upwardly skittering clerks to tattle, or to slip alongside a bereaved widow and say, oh so sincerely, "I'd really like to be the one to tell *John's* side of the story." But to get military commanders at the highest level, in the heat of war, to set aside large chunks of their time to chatter on about who-said-what in the Situation Room, who-wore-and-ate-what that fateful weekend at Camp David . . .

How does he do it? It's not as if Woodward sneaks up on his interview targets disguised as some ingenuous free-lancer working on a field manual for the Boy Scouts of America. The ARMED AND DANGEROUS posters have been out for more than a decade and a half. We are dealing, after all, with a muckraking serial killer who has

Victor Gold is The American Spectator*'s national correspondent.*

REFLECTIONS ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION



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made his name and fortune skewering and barbecuing some of the most prominent figures in Western society. Do you doubt that a publisher's announcement that Bob Woodward's next monumental project will be the life story of Mother Teresa would bring the entire Judeo-Christian world to ask, as one, "What's *she* been up to?"

One would think that any enlightened senior officer in the Pentagon, on being approached by Bob Woodward, would reach for either his aluminum athletic truss or his gun; especially if that officer was serving a Republican President who was Richard Nixon's national party chairman during Watergate and headed the CIA under Gerald Ford. One would think. Yet Woodward managed to find, in the TOP SECRET/CONFIDENTIAL/EYES ONLY ambience of the Pentagon, a Deep Brass; though not so Deep as to escape detection.

That Colin Powell is the primary chatterbox whose behind-the-scenes-gossip fills the pages of Woodward's latest docu-fiction is, by now, beyond question. *Exhibit A*: Everybody says he is and he has yet to deny it. We are not, keep in mind, operating in a civilian court of law where an accused's silence can't be used against him. When a national newsmagazine, hyping excerpts from the book, features Powell's face on its cover, tagging him "The Reluctant Warrior," it's a reasonable assumption that if he hadn't been just that, he'd be cutting off the story's head and killing it.

Exhibit B is the fact that, as everyone in the Pentagon corridors knows, Powell spent an inordinate amount of time gassing with Bob Woodward in the past year. To be sure, from the perspective of those who took part in the decision-making that went into the Persian Gulf war, anything over ten seconds might be considered too much. But we're talking *inordinate* here, like hours adding up to days. Woodward, as anyone who has watched him work can testify, is a total-immersion inquisitor. Once a source makes it clear that he has a personal agenda to grind, Bob homes in like a smart bomb, morning, noon, and night. Colin Powell's personal agenda? Try these on for size:

From *The Commanders*, page 302:

> The operation needed a field marshal—someone of the highest rank who was the day-to-day manager, Powell felt. The President, given his other domestic and political responsibilities, couldn't be chief coordinator. It should be the national security adviser. Instead, Scowcroft had become the First Companion and all-purpose playmate to the President on golf, fishing and weekend outings. He was regularly failing in his larger duty to ensure that policy was carefully debated and formulated. . . . Sununu only added to the problem, exerting little or no control over the process as White House chief of staff.

For the record—and for those slow of wit in such arcane Washington matters as How to Make People Who Cross You Look Like Jerks—neither Scowcroft nor Sununu gave much quality time to Woodward while he was preparing *The Commanders*. Proving? It never hurts when the interviewee's agenda meshes with the interviewer's. And for those who do cooperate, there are always those sweet rewards a powerful Washington journalist can pass out to his friends, something no amount of PR money can buy.

From *The Commanders*, pp. 375-76:

> He thought of the troops and pilots as kids, even teenagers. They would be flying in the darkness or dropping down behind the lines to spot targets. It would come down to one American kid dealing with one Iraqi kid. Both would want to live. . . . Powell felt a foreboding and a chill. The war was in the hands of these kids. And if they screwed up, it would mean that Powell and the generals—the adults—hadn't done their jobs well enough. That was as it should be. . . . It remained quiet in the Chairman's office. No one knew or had any real idea how many Americans would die in the war, he realized. . . . He was hoping it would not be a lot. On this most important day of his life, he had one overriding thought. There was no cheering, no thrill, no eagerness, no battle fever. None of the emotions of war raged. He thought only one thing: "How many will not come back?"

So much for the question of whether the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is on cozy terms with the author of *The Commanders*. Not since Alexander Haig was working up a cauliflowered phone ear talking to Woodward during the Watergate days have we seen such buoyant prose about a military man written by the *Washington Post*'s star performer. Haig, we were led to believe in *The Final Days*, saved the country from the clutches of a manic paranoid in the Oval Office. Powell, under the careful tutelage of his JCS predecessor, Admiral William Crowe—so we're told by Woodward—struggled to keep an "emotional" President in check, despite the negative input of Bush's top White House aides.

Thus do astute Washington gameplayers assure their politically correct place in history, if only instant-history. But how could Colin Powell have been that short-sighted? Didn't he know that when Woodward's book came out, the fat would be in the fire?

Not necessarily. For one thing, *The Commanders* was originally scripted as a study of the Pentagon and Operation Just Cause, the Panamanian venture. Powell's early contacts with Woodward might have been aimed at clearing the air on that subject. Then one thing led to another and there he was, involved in a larger war. It's entirely possible, looking back at August 1990, that Powell, for all his public bravado, was concerned that the larger war might not turn out well; that by the time the book was published, American troops would be bogged down in bloody landfighting, and he wanted it on record that it wasn't *his* fault we had a *manic warmonger* in the Oval Office.

But more: A large measure of Bob Woodward's special gift—aside from his nonpareil ability to invent dialogue and slip inside people's brain cells—is that he knows how to give his interviewees the warm, reassuring impression that they can speak freely, he'll protect them. And when it's all over and he doesn't protect them? Too bad, General, that was yesterday's book.

Mother Teresa, screen your calls.□

DE GAULLE: THE REBEL, 1890-1944

Jean Lacouture/W. W. Norton/615 pp. $29.95

Mark Falcoff

One day during the 1920s, a senior French general sat down under a tree at the Ecole de Guerre with one of his students, a field-grade officer, to refresh himself during a break between maneuvers. "My dear fellow," he said, "I have a curious feeling that you are intended for a very great destiny."

The young officer, who was Charles de Gaulle, replied quietly and even modestly, "Yes, so have I."

The story could serve as a leitmotif to Jean Lacouture's biography, published last year in France to mark the hundredth anniversary of de Gaulle's birth. And let there be no mistake about it: this is a book about a truly extraordinary man. If de Gaulle had died in

late 1940, he would still merit a significant mention in the history of the French army for his brilliant career as a cadet at St-Cyr, a distinguished combat record in the First World War, military attache in Poland, member of the French general staff, professor at the Ecole de Guerre, officer in Syria and in new model field units in France, author of a strategic doctrine of armored mobility, leader of the desperate effort to resist the German invasion in June 1940, and veteran of Dunkirk.

Yet all of this was but prologue to his role as the focal point of all those forces that refused to accept France's humiliation at the hands of the Germans. In this volume, Lacouture devotes half his text to the period up to the 1940 collapse, half to the subsequent four years.[1] In many ways they are two quite different books: one is a biography in the best sense of the word, rich in dramatic detail, and with a good sense of the relationship between the subject and his time; the second is a prolix, scrappy, contentious (and often tedious) history of French-American and French-British relations during the Second World War.

Although a veteran correspondent who covered most of the big stories of postwar France, including the wars of Indochina and Algeria, and author of commercially successful biographies of Andre Malraux, Pierre Mendès-France, and Ho Chi Minh, for most of his career Lacouture was associated with the French left, who have been remarkably ungenerous and ungrateful to a man to whom their country owed so much. Now, however, Lacouture (and perhaps the left in general) has gone over, bag and baggage, to the other extreme. Of the Lacouture who appears in these pages it could be said, at times at least, what Jean Villars recently said about Régis Debray: that he is "*un gaulliste hystérique à défaut d'avoir été un gaulliste historique.*"[2] Is anti-Americanism the persistent link between the "old" and "new" Lacouture?[3]

The account of de Gaulle's early life—that is, the years before

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[1]The other two volumes, *The Politician* and *The Sovereign*, which carry the story from 1944 to de Gaulle's death in 1970, are being condensed into one; they will be published later this year.

[2]"a hysterical Gaullist, having not been a historical Gaullist."

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1940—is rich in unexpected (and often contradictory) details. Though his father was a typical conservative Catholic of the Third Republic, he was also a Dreyfusard. When de Gaulle graduated from St-Cyr and was posted to his first infantry regiment in Arras in 1911, his commanding officer was Colonel Philippe Pétain—who would sponsor his rapid ascent in the officer corps, only to sign his sentence of death in absentia twenty-nine years later. ("Never did I take so much care of any young officer," the old marshal summarized the relationship in his last days of captivity and disgrace. "It did not turn out well for me.") As a prisoner of war in Germany in 1915 and 1916, de Gaulle shared quarters with a young Russian captain who would later become Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky.

In the 1920s de Gaulle began to write on military topics, and his books, particularly *The Edge of the Sword* and *The Army of the Future*, established him as an unusually learned and cultured exponent of armored warfare. Though little read in France, they were well known in Germany and the Soviet Union. Conversely, at a time when virtually nobody in France had even heard of the Nazi party, de Gaulle had already read Arthur Moeller van den Bruck's prophetic book *Das dritte Reich*, which appeared in 1923, the year of the Munich beerhall putsch.

Like most French officers, de Gaulle was drawn to the right politically, but as a military reformer, he had more in common with men of the center and the moderate left, who were willing to listen to his proposals. In fact, his campaign for a Franco-Soviet pact in 1935, his denunciation of the Munich accords, and his eventual willingness to throw in with the defiant and near-defeated British led the royalist *Action Française* to denounce him as a warmonger. "It mattered little to him," Lacouture writes, "whether someone belonged to the right or the left; it was by their attitude to the proceedings of the Nazis that he judged them." If this seems unremarkable today, when so many people in France assert false claims to having been *resistants*, one has to recall how few men of de Gaulle's profession, let alone education, temperament, and family background, refused to take an oath to the collaborationist Vichy regime.

Indeed, it is de Gaulle's supreme act of defiance in 1940—while nearly everyone else in *bien-pensante* France, beginning with his old mentor Pétain, was falling over himself to be of service to the Nazi occupiers—that justifies the title of this volume. But as Lacouture shows very well, the break with Petain had actually come much earlier—over the issue of active versus passive defense against a possible German invasion. In *The Army of the Future* (1934), de Gaulle had argued that the Maginot Line "doomed France to impotence. The only defense against aggression was counterattack and movement." This meant that, instead of mixing monumental quantities of concrete, France should have been building tanks—hundreds, if not thousands, of them.

To argue so was to take on not only Pétain but the entire French army establishment, which immediately recognized the threat to the enormous prestige it had invested in the Maginot concept. "When we have devoted so much effort to the building of a fortified barrier," said War Minister Gen. Louis Maurin, "is it to be supposed that we should be mad enough to go outside that barrier, in pursuit of who knows what adventure?" General Henri Giraud was only slightly less wounding: "Colonel de Gaulle's ideas may be brilliant, but they are the kind that may make us lose the next war." As for Pétain himself, he now spoke of his former protégé only as "an ambitious man, and very ill-bred."

The most exciting chapters deal with the period 1935-40, during which de Gaulle, having disentangled himself from the *pétainiste* military establishment, quietly, patiently, and persistently worked the French parliament and press on behalf of his ideas. He was ultimately rewarded by premier Paul Reynaud in the spring of 1940 with a temporary promotion to brigadier general and a position as undersecretary of state in the Ministry of War. It was in this capacity that he flew to London for the first time, to try to persuade the British to throw in more forces rather than withdraw at Dunkirk. Though de Gaulle was unsuccessful, he made a strong impact on Churchill, who knew a good man when he saw one. Thus was forged a relationship that would change the course of French history and, indeed, the course of the Second World War.

The rest of the story is how de Gaulle gathered up a handful of demobilized soldiers, proscribed intellectuals, and out-of-work parliamentarians and created something he called *la France libre*, and then *la France combattante*. It was as head of these forces (with a rather important assist from the British and American armies) that he was eventually to enter Paris as the Supreme Liberator in 1944. A tale of this type must be projected on a very large canvas, and Lacouture does not always maintain an adequate sense of proportion. It is all too easy to forget that, for much of the time between 1940 and 1944, de Gaulle's "fighting France" was a very small France indeed.

Lacouture lurches into an ultra-orthodox Gaullist version of the war, in which "France" and de Gaulle are virtually coterminous. Would that this had been the case. A more generous interpretation would have congratulated Churchill on having staked his prestige and resources on such a long-shot, and stuck with his investment through thick and thin. (And not without serious provocation from de Gaulle—it was Churchill, remember, who said, "Of all the crosses I must bear, the heaviest is the Cross of Lorraine.") Instead, Lacouture dredges up every petty resentment, every paranoid suspicion, every unfortunate misunderstanding, and wrings from each problem as much currency as he can in order to add it to the historic account of French grudges against Great Britain.

Imaginez-vous, then, what Lacouture has to say about de Gaulle's relations with the United States. The final two hundred pages read like a lawyer's brief intended to justify the great Frenchman's subsequent (at times nearly pathological) anti-Americanism. Lacouture does know something about the United States—but not as much as he thinks. (Among other errors of fact, Alger Hiss was *not* a "victim of McCarthyism," nor was New York Mayor Fiorello La Guardia a "Sicilian," nor was Henry Wallace the "future" vice president in 1944.) Lacouture seems to have taken a look at some materials in English, a language he knows well, though not Herbert Feis's *Our Vichy Gamble*, Sumner Welles's *Time for Decision*, or other works that shed a more sympathetic light on American policy toward both Vichy and de Gaulle. Nor does he seem to be familiar with Raoul Aglion's ground-breaking *Roosevelt and De Gaulle*, published in France seven years ago.[4]

I agree with Lacouture's interpretation of FDR—that, when it came to European politics, he was a fool, and a dangerous fool at that. The nicest thing that can be said about his policy toward France and de Gaulle was that it was downright wrong. Even so, the case against Washington's "Vichy gamble" is not nearly as one-sided as this book makes out. First of all, the great fear of both Britain and the United States after 1940 was that the French fleet, then among the world's largest and most modern, would fall into Axis hands. This explains to a large degree why Roosevelt spent so much time cultivating Pétain, and later, the Vichyite or quasi-Vichyite officers in North Africa (Admiral Darlan and General Giraud). The decision to work with Darlan was also inspired by a desire to

[3]In the recent Gulf crisis, the tiny "anti-war" movement in France, consisting of Communists, Trotskyites, Greens, Arabs (and Arabists), constantly appealed to the country's Gaullist "heritage," which the Socialist government was accused of traducing by fighting on the same side as the United States.

[4]We are promised a complete bibliography in the second volume (yet to come), so it is possible that these works were consulted. They are not among those directly cited here.

"The postmoderns have caused us to lose our pride in the American Constitution. . . ."

HARVEY C. MANSFIELD, JR.

Beth Vangel

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minimize casualties in the North African landings.

If FDR was wrong in his judgment of individuals (seeing anti-German Vichyites where for all practical purposes none existed), and particularly wrong in his belief that de Gaulle was a fascist, he was helped to reach those conclusions by Aléxis Leger, former permanent undersecretary of the Quai d'Orsay, who had taken refuge in Washington and was regarded as little less than an oracle on French affairs. As Aglion points out in his book, 85 percent of the French community in the United States was anti-Gaullist, when not Vichyite through-and-through: this included not merely the business community in New York but the French Embassy and such cultural luminaries as André Maurois and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

Moreover, in France itself—this is the dirty secret of the war and the Resistance—most people were Vichyite until almost the last year of the war. As late as April 1944 the perfidious Pétain was welcomed by friendly crowds in occupied Paris. And if, as Lacouture says here, the *maquis* grew tenfold between January and August 1944, might one be permitted to connect this less to growing opportunities for action than to a correct reading of the signs of the times? If Americans failed to swallow the Myth of the Resistance whole, on this at least they were not misinformed, even if they sometimes arrived at their conclusions by twisted, even bizarre routes.

The real problem facing American (and to some extent, British) policy was when to recognize that de Gaulle's forces had attained sufficient critical mass to be taken seriously in the high politics of the war. It seems this point was never really reached—certainly not by Roosevelt at any time—and a subsequent generation of Americans were left to pay the bill, as they paid for so many of his other wretched policies. This is the sad tale that Lacouture could have told so much more compellingly had he been willing to cut his Gaullism with a bit of soda and ice.

What is particularly irritating is not so much Lacouture's views as his tone. Writing in the late 1980s, he finds everything so much simpler than it appeared more than four decades before; armed with the foreknowledge of de Gaulle's later greatness, he artificially (and wrongly) reduces the dimensions of all his wartime contemporaries. This and the breathless, liturgical prose leave one feeling that there is more to the story than we are being told. We close *The Rebel* hoping against hope that the subsequent volume will not merely match this one in detail, but also surpass it in balance and fairness. De Gaulle deserves no less. □

BENJAMIN O. DAVIS, JR., AMERICAN: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Benjamin O. Davis, Jr./Smithsonian Institution Press
442 pp. $19.95

Dave Shiflett

It was reported recently that a gentleman, on hearing that the jetliner he had just boarded was being piloted by a female, promptly deplaned. That he was the only chicken speaks highly of our society, which believes that all God's children should have the opportunity to smash 747s into the sides of mountains. How times have changed. It wasn't too long ago we were particular not only about who flew our passenger planes, but who was allowed to drop bombs on our enemies. Black Americans were denied this opportunity (as are women, for the moment). Why was this?

As Gen. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. reports in this autobiography, a 1925 War College report put blacks lower on the human totem pole because of "their smaller cranium, lighter brain, [and] cowardly and immoral character." The result of this study was that blacks were not encouraged to fly, and absolutely forbidden to command white pilots. Gen. Davis is the man who broke the color barrier, doing so with quiet dignity, and surely leaving many observers with a bad case of the shakes.

Consider the times in which the general was raised. During the 1920s, to mention but one incident, young Davis and his family were confronted by the Ku Klux Klan during one of that organization's intimidation exercises. The Klan was riled over plans to award many of the jobs at a new black VA hospital to, of all people, blacks, and in an attempt to reverse the decision the Klansmen donned sheets, lit torches, and went marching past the Tuskegee Institute and environs. Local black residents were advised to lie low, preferably under their beds, lest their presence inspire the marchers to set the neighborhood afire.

The Davis family declined to hug the floorboards, and instead took to their front porch, with Davis's father, a regular Army officer, reviewing the sad parade in his dress uniform. This might not seem like much these days, but back in the 1920s it could take authorities quite a while to answer a black man's call to 911. Gen. Davis inherited his father's guts.

The general's book has attracted the greatest attention for its section on West Point, which he entered in 1932, having been nominated by a black Republican representative who was not a member of the Congressional Club. These were lonely times for the young man: he had no roommate, nor did anyone talk with him except in the line of duty. The silent treatment went on for four years, the social monotony broken only when Davis met his future wife, Agatha. He graduated thirty-fifth in a class of 276, then set out to get himself into a command cockpit. Heavy flak awaited him.

Even though Davis had graduated in the top fifth of his West Point class, that War College study, with its lighter brains, smaller craniums, and other goblins, put a command position out of his reach. Davis feared he would spend his life teaching, but was saved from that fate when FDR ordered the creation of the nation's first black air squadron. Davis was chosen commander.

The 99th Pursuit Squadron, headquartered at Tuskegee, Alabama, was a great step forward, but hardly the answer to the local white community's prayers. It was bad enough that black MPs carried sidearms when they drove their Jeeps into town, and indeed the locals demanded that these men be disarmed. Worse yet was the fact that these black men had wings—P-40 fighters, to be exact. One can imagine Jim Bob and friends looking up from their fishing holes to see these fellows zoom past, machine guns and bombs glistening in the sun. Visions of the Apocalypse, no doubt. The 99th failed to live up to these expectations, readying themselves for battle rather than dive-bombing the local country clubs. Davis's men had other plans for members of the master race.

The idea that blacks were unfit for air combat was destroyed once and for all over Anzio, when on two days in 1944, twelve Teutonic gentlemen were blasted from the sky by black pilots, which no doubt did not go over well with the welcoming committee at Valhalla. The press's first reaction to those victories was to downplay them, as did *Time* magazine in a piece that drew a response from Agatha Davis, whose letter was full of blood, guts, and razor blades.

Davis is at his best when describing the war years, but the book could have benefited from some tighter editing; even great Americans can get a little heavy on detail. "On Christmas Day," General Davis writes early in the book, "besides celebrating with decorated trees, fruitcakes and assorted nuts, we flew an escort mission to provide cover for a bomber formation attacking Brux, Germany." By the time we get to his remembrances of life as a bureaucrat, we find this: "Transportation is a public service, and therefore its benefits had to be assessed in terms of broader societal goals. If a proposed facility had environmental effects that were too severe, then it was open to ques-

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tion whether the community would really be served by it."

Well, a man's got to earn a living somehow. If there isn't a lot of style in this book, there is a wry sense of humor at work. Readers should also turn the other cheek when the general admits to having been a Mondale supporter and a fan of affirmative action. No record is spotless. □

WATCH ON THE RIGHT: CONSERVATIVE INTELLECTUALS IN THE REAGAN ERA

J. David Hoeveler, Jr./University of Wisconsin Press/333 pp. $24.95

D. G. Myers

Lionel Trilling's remark in *The Liberal Imagination* (1950) that there were no conservative ideas in circulation has become an article of faith on the left, even if the passing decades have made Trilling himself look almost conservative. Today, among those university professors who are in a hurry to abandon the human heritage, the only opposition acknowledged is that of "the Killer Bs": Allan Bloom and William J. Bennett, Jr. Equally alliterative conservative thinkers—Irving Babbitt, Jacques Barzun, Julien Benda, Peter L. Berger, M. E. Bradford, William F. Buckley, Jr., Jakob Burckhardt, Edmund Burke—are ignored, if not unknown. Just recently, an esteemed professor of English at Duke University said that, while both the left and the right have offered critiques of American education, the difference between them "is one of sophistication and complexity." The right presents its case in a vulgar "flag-waving mode," while the left urges its reforms "in the context of a full-fledged epistemological argument, complete with a theory of the self, an analysis of the emergence and ontology of institutions," and buzz buzz buzz.

J. David Hoeveler's latest book makes any such self-congratulatory dismissal of conservative thought impossible to sustain. In the eighties, Hoeveler points out, conservative ideas "achieved an ascendancy marked by conservative triumphs in the presidential elections of 1980, 1984, and 1988." The sniggering on the left at the mental capacities of Ronald Reagan and Dan Quayle cannot distract attention from the fact that behind the success of conservative politicians there stands a movement of conservative ideas that has gained wider approval from the American people than any recent movement on the left. Hoeveler even calls this movement a "renaissance," and in *Watch on the Right* he examines it in detail, while placing it in the larger context of conservative thinking since Burke.

Hoeveler's thesis is that so-called neoconservatives, who believe themselves merely to be flinching at the radicalization of liberalism and who are looked upon with suspicion by the Old Right, have more in common than either side may realize with the "principles and prejudices that have marked conservative thought over two centuries." He selects for close study eight contemporary figures: four neoconservatives (Irving Kristol, Hilton Kramer, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Michael Novak) and four intellectuals affiliated with an older, more "European," strain of conservatism (William F. Buckley, Jr., George Will, Robert Nisbet, and R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.).

In criticizing an essay on Will by the late Henry Fairlie, Hoeveler complains that Fairlie "threw together a potpourri of scattered reflections by Will but disdained to see any thematic core in them." *Watch on the Right* is no such disdainful potpourri. Hoeveler believes that each writer's body of work amounts to a philosophy—at least to a characteristic way of squinting at the world. He isn't especially interested in biographies of his eight thinkers, and his book is a little thin on such basic information as which books were written in what order.

Conservatives may be almost anything else in addition to conservatives. They may be historians or economists or literary critics or political theorists, though at least six of the eight intellectuals in Hoeveler's book can be described as some variety of journalist—as F. Scott Fitzgerald puts it, "that most limited of all specialists, the 'well-rounded man.' " Since none of his subjects wrote philosophy per se, Hoeveler's method is not capable of showing how each one's thinking was given shape by the particular mode in which he did write, because modern conservatism, unlike Marxism for instance, is not in itself a mode of thought. What, then, makes someone a conservative?

Hoeveler tries to explain American conservatism in the idiom of general ideas. In his view, its rebirth was attended by four main principles. These were: (1) anti-utopianism, an animosity toward any abstract scheme for the perfection of society; (2) democratism, a trust in the habit and memory, the fundamental wisdom, of the people at large; (3) liberalism (in its classical sense), putting freedom before liberation, and therefore responsibility before grievance; and (4) the bourgeois ethic, "the source of the self-discipline that makes intelligence and its application possible."

These principles exhibit both the continuity and the newness of contemporary conservatism. Although recent anti-utopianism is inspired by disdain for the vague mysticism of sixties counterculture and the bold plans of the New Left, this feature of conservatism is as old as anti-Jacobinism. "Conservatives from Burke to Robert Nisbet have identified [the French Revolution] as a revolution by intellectuals," Hoeveler says, "one in which abstract theory envisioned a new order for human society." But more recent misgivings about intellectuals have assumed the form of philippics against a "new class" of professionals in law, government, the press, and the university—an "elite corps of impudent snobs," in Spiro T. Agnew's less sparing phrase. This anti-elitism is nicely balanced by a confidence in the sentiments and opinions of the common folk on such matters as crime, obscenity, racial justice, the rewarding of merit, and the threat of Communism. It is this confidence in the common man, for instance, that distinguishes a writer like Tyrrell from his master, H. L. Mencken.

Hoeveler is superb at drawing connections and parallels, at tacking recent writers onto the map of historical conservatism. This is as it should be, since the 49-year-old Hoeveler teaches intellectual history at the Milwaukee campus of the University of Wisconsin. He skillfully braids Kristol's supply-side economics, Kramer's modernist aesthetics, and even Novak's passion for sports into a coherent humanism. If he seems to place Irving Babbitt at the center of American conservatism, it's no surprise, for Hoeveler is best known for his definitive and tightly written account of Babbitt's New Humanism, published in 1977. Each chapter of *Watch on the Right* makes for interesting reading, particularly the one on Novak, perhaps because his intellectual progress has been the most tortuous.

As a whole, though, the book is curiously unfocused (to use Hoeveler's own phrase), partly because the writers it covers do not really constitute a cohesive movement. Considered as a set of general ideas and principles, conservatism flashes with brilliance, but as a distinctive genus of thought, it seems occasional, unpremeditated, ad hoc. Hoeveler observes that recent conservative writers have "failed to define a conservative philosophy of knowledge." This may explain much about the intellectual history of recent conservatism, from the left's intolerance of it to Buckley's failure to deliver his long-promised book on the movement. It may also suggest that what conservatism requires at present is not intellectual history, no matter how informative and interesting, but a searching philosophy of itself, an account of what (if anything) it means to think conservatively. As intellectual history, though, *Watch on the Right* is about as good as can be. □

D. G. Myers teaches English at Texas A&M, recently selected as the site of the Bush presidential library.

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THE PRIZE:
THE EPIC QUEST FOR OIL, MONEY AND POWER

Daniel Yergin/Simon and Schuster/876 pp. $24.95

Edward Norden

Not love but decayed plankton makes the world go round—that's the burden of Daniel Yergin's great slab of a nonfiction bestseller, which he worked on for seven years and had the luck to see published a few weeks before Operation Desert Storm. He ends his account by repeating his thesis: "Petroleum remains the motive force of industrial society and the lifeblood of the civilization that it helped to create." Well, if what Yergin means is that petroleum products warm us, cool us, move us, and keep us comfortable while we make wealth and consume it, this is an obvious truth worthy of constant repetition. He means something more than that, though.

As the desire for spices and gold underlay the politics of the sixteenth century, so the desire and need for oil, and the fight over the power which possession of oil confers, supposedly explains not only the world politics but the world wars of our own century. This is a large claim, which Yergin may have felt he had to include in order to justify the book's length. In any case, he fails to prove it. Yes, Hitler made a stab for Baku, but possession of the Baku fields wasn't the reason he went to war with Russia. The Japanese needed Indonesian oil. But that wasn't the only reason they bombed Pearl Harbor.

The Prize, even if it doesn't live up to its portentous thesis, is nonetheless worth buying and having. It should be kept on the shelf next to Anthony Sampson's more stylish *The Seven Sisters* of a few years back, which chronicled the origins and tallied the fortunes of the majors. Yergin, an "energy consultant" who operates out of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and wrote a book during the Vietnam war placing 51 percent of the blame for the Cold War on American shoulders, read everything before writing *The Prize* and spoke with everyone alive, excluding only Kissinger, Sheikh Yamani, and Saddam Hussein. His book is accordingly long on anecdotes and cameos, ranging over a huge canvas of places and characters, from Pithole concessions in Pennsylvania in the 1860s to T. Boone Pickens.

Yergin also retells the stories of Standard Oil, Shell, Gulf, Royal Dutch, and so on, but he doesn't stint on the wildcatters and independents, who have always been terrifically colorful and occasionally have changed the face of the industry, if not of history. We meet, among many others, William F. Buckley, Sr., who had his business nationalized (his children would say stolen) by Lazaro Cardenas; and Armand Hammer, who made a deal with the young Col. Qaddafi in 1970 which Yergin rightly describes as revolutionary, a deal that set the stage for the emergence of OPEC as a fearsome adversary.

Some of the stories are stale, some of the grammar faulty, some of the portraits boilerplate—we learn, for example that Churchill, who as First Lord of the Admiralty switched the Royal Navy to oil in 1911, was the "son of the brilliant but erratic Lord Randolph Churchill and his beautiful American wife, Jennie Jerome." Like most Americans today, Yergin doesn't know the difference between "compare to" and "compare with." On the other hand, his sketch of concession agent Calouste Gulbenkian, "Mr. Five Percent," is fun.

And he does have some lyric moments. Here's his précis of a chapter on the years between the end of World War II and the Yom Kippur War:

> Whatever the twists and turns in global politics, whatever the ebb of imperial power and the flow of national pride, one trend in the decades following World War II progressed in a straight and rapidly ascending line—the consumption of oil. If it can be said, in the abstract, that the sun energized the planet, it was oil that now powered its human population, both in its familiar forms as fuel and in the proliferation of new petrochemical products. Oil emerged triumphant, the undisputed King, a monarch garbed in a dazzling array of plastics. He was generous to his loyal subjects, sharing his wealth to, and even beyond, the point of waste. His reign was a time of confidence, of growth, of expansion, of astonishing economic performance. His largesse transformed his kingdom, ushering in a new drive-in civilization. It was the Age of Hydrocarbon Man.

On the whole, Yergin's is more a celebratory book than an explanatory one. If the prime motive of the early American oilmen was greed, their "merciless methods and unbridled lust" nevertheless "turned an agrarian republic . . . into the world's greatest industrial power," self-evidently a good thing. And he continues to give the oil companies, in concert with Washington, a B-plus for riding out the bumps of postcolonialism and managing, most of the time, to supply the First World with enough crude at more or less affordable prices—if bestsellers get to heaven, Scoop Jackson didn't enjoy *The Prize*. And, as well as admiring the resource and industry he's writing about, Yergin is fair about the motives, interests, rights, and pride of the Latin Americans, Arabs, and Persians who have had the questionable luck of sitting on most of the oil and who have long been wrestling with Europeans and Americans for control of it.

A geopolitical mishap tucked most of the oil under the sands and waters of the Third World. The amoral deals that American and European companies and governments have struck all along with the locals don't shock Yergin, considering how important oil is, nor is he shocked when treachery and violence are used against those who won't play ball, as in Iran to bring Mossadegh down, or in Kuwait to get Saddam out. Yergin's realism makes explicit that not only the West and Japan, but also the wretched of the earth, could never have afforded to trust Saddam with the mother of all petroleum lodes.

Simon Schama dubs oil "black gold," in a blurb for his friend Yergin's book, and one is reminded that Breughel pictured gold as a form of useless dung. Yergin finds petroleum more attractive than not, in any case uncontested so far as a source of power, profit, prosperity, and—indirectly—the pleasures of peaceful civilization. Yet what of the trouble and pain for birds, fish, and humans bound up in maintaining economies, societies, civilizations on this filthy stuff, hidden away in the earth's most godforsaken corners? Oil stinks, and not only literally. "The excrement of the devil," the Venezuelan Pérez Alfonzo called it, and as a cofounder of OPEC he was in a position to know. "The whole place smells like a corps of soldiers when they have the diarrhea," Yergin quotes a visitor to Pithole.

And now, greasy snow in Kashmir, burning wells in Kuwait, and thousands of Iraqis dead, all because Saddam made a wrong move in a region of the planet which, if there were no oil there, CNN would ignore. Who can guarantee that this will have been the last war for "black gold"? Certainly not Yergin, who writes:

> As we look forward toward the twenty-first century, it is clear that mastery will certainly come as much from a computer chip as from a barrel of oil. Yet . . . until some alternative source of energy is found, oil will still have far-reaching effects.

Actually, alternatives have been found that are infinite, clean, and ubiquitous. There is nuclear power, of course, but it is controversial. It thus only remains for our politicians, inventors, and investors to make solar energy efficient enough and cheap enough to send bloody King Oil into exile. □

Edward Norden is a writer living in Jerusalem.

CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 7)

who, whipped into a frenzy by their clerics, stormed out of the mosques on the Temple Mount and loosed a barrage of rocks, bricks, and Molotov cocktails on the worshipping Jews beneath them. These worshippers, a crowd of approximately 20,000, had assembled for prayer at the Western Wall, the holiest place in the Jewish religion.

Also, the "Israeli security forces" were simply police, routinely stationed at the Temple Mount. When attacked by the mob, they responded first with tear gas and then with rubber bullets. When those ran out and when the police post had been burned down and when the forty police involved were at the point of being lynched, they opened fire with live ammunition.

I think it is important that this matter be clarified in your pages. I believe that the casual reference to this incident could create a quite wrong impression on those who are not informed about this matter.

—Gerardo Joffe
San Francisco, California

Polish Progress

I've got Your Magazine subscribed for me by a conservative friend from the distant, yet great, state of Montana, Mrs. Fern Flanagan. It's a pleasure for me to read all these openly anti-Communist articles in your paper. That's something I was deprived of all my life. However strong the anti-Communist movement in Poland may seem to be on the surface, it's very weak deep inside people's hearts. That's why your stories are so important to me. They are healthy in essence, they have this precious, and forgotten here, quality of the healthy way of looking at things. You don't hide behind clichés and you openly think of Communists as a synonym of all that's wrong, sick, and unnatural. Very rightly so! . . .

In general, thanks to my visits to the states, to personal contacts with Americans and finally to your magazine, I've found out that conservatism is not what Communist propaganda told me it was. It's not bad, it's not dirty, it's not CIA, it's not everything that Communism is! I only wish that this kind of thinking were more popular in my native country. . . .

—Kamil Turowski
Lodz, Poland

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HELL OF A TOWN

by William Tucker

In the little New Jersey town where I grew up, we could just see the tip of the Empire State Building on the horizon. You could get there for a dollar and a quarter on the Lakeland bus. New York was the Emerald City. Like most people I know, I live here because I have always thought it the most important and exciting place in the world.

I never wanted to live anywhere else. My sophomore year in high school, I fell in love with a Gordon Jenkins operetta called *Manhattan Tower.* Thirty years later, I stumbled across the album again and played it. It was a transcendent moment. I realized that my whole ambition had been shaped by these old show tunes—that I had been humming them for years as I walked the streets—and that my dream had essentially come true.

That dream has grown harder to sustain with every passing year. On June 30, the City of New York will finish its fiscal year about $450 million in the red. Mayor Dinkins is already talking about closing down libraries, draining swimming pools, and turning off streetlights. This is the "Firemen First" principle—when the budget crunch comes, cut the most visible and necessary services to soften people up for tax hikes. Strange as it may seem, this strategy enjoys much popular support.

The mindset of the average New Yorker has not changed since the 1930s. To everyone from Governor Mario Cuomo on down, "The City" is the source of all social beneficence. "The City" is a palpable entity, capable of providing everything for everybody if only we feed it enough money and find the politicians to run it right. When a drug-crazed mother in Brownsville throws her baby in the trash, it's because "The City" didn't have enough social workers. When two kids in Spanish Harlem rob a bodega (killing the owner in the process), it's because "The City" didn't provide enough educational opportunity.

The myth of government as provider is supported by a political system that has not reformed itself since the days of Boss Tweed. Ever wonder why New York state has never had a tax revolt? Simple. Voters still do not have the right of ballot initiative, a reform adopted by a majority of states during the Populist era.

Even fielding an opposition candidate is nearly impossible. In Oregon, you can run for governor with 1,000 signatures or a $100 filing fee. In Texas, when Lyndon Johnson gave up his Senate seat to become vice president, seventy-two people ran to replace him. But in New York, when maverick Abe Hirshfeld challenged Mario Cuomo's choice for lieutenant governor in 1986, a Cuomo-appointed judge ruled that, for technical reasons, Hirshfeld's 70,000 signatures did not meet the 20,000-signature requirement. "When it comes to making it difficult to get on the ballot," says Richard Smolka, publisher of *Election Administration Report*, "New York is in a class by itself."

Most New Yorkers figure that the only way to get ahead is to join the Party of Government. In my own gentrified neighborhood of Park Slope, the only sign of the budget crisis has been the panic in people's voices as they discuss the possibility that they or their spouses might lose their City jobs.

Within one block of my house I know eight lawyers. One has a private practice, one works for the state attorney general, and six work for The City. The mother of a kid on my son's baseball team is a lawyer with the Human Resources Administration (HRA). Her job makes her a member of the Teamsters' Union. A few weeks ago she was telling me how The City was dealing with the financial crisis: "It's such a joke. The first thing they did was send around a memo saying we had to get rid of one out of every hundred light bulbs. The City doesn't know which end is up."

The City knows exactly which end is up. There's no need to improve services when people have no power of choice. The idea is to create new services ("unmet needs") and put more potential voters on the payroll. Every government employee I know complains about the antiquated conditions at his job. The guy in the state attorney general's office became so exasperated with the lack of office equipment that he bought his own laptop computer, which he carries to work every day. Governments constantly steer spending away from capital improvements and into personal salaries—remember, computers don't vote.

The City of New York now employs 353,000 people—one of every twenty-one residents. More than 93 percent are union members. "Even the twenty-five chaplains in the prison system have their own union," says Forrest Markowitz, deputy research director of the Department of Labor Relations. "They send around a priest, a minister, and a rabbi every year to tell us they need a pay raise."

Middle management is in on the scam. Policemen and firemen regularly retire on pensions greater than their salaries, by piling up hundreds of hours of overtime their last year of employment—all with the consent of their supervisors. (Pensions are based on the final year's earnings, including overtime.) The suburbs are filled with men in their mid-forties working in liquor stores and car dealerships while collecting City pensions. Some don't even bother to retire. When I used to go to the YMCA once a week, there was one guy who was always in the gym—whatever the day, no matter what the hour. He was there when I arrived and there when I left. One day I asked him what he did for a living, assuming he must be independently wealthy. "I'm a City social worker for sexually abused children," he said. "It's too depressing going around visiting these families, so I come down here instead."

Stuck with the bill, taxpayers are leaving left and right. A seat on the New York Stock Exchange, which cost $1.15 million in 1988, now sells for $350,000. CBS is supposedly getting ready to decamp. When the Moving Picture Machine Operators union refused to take a cut in overtime pay last April, Hollywood began moving movie production out of New York within hours. New York City is being defeated by the mobility of modern capital.

Even more mobile are the highly educated liberals who built the system. One of the owners in our first co-op in Brooklyn was an Old Leftist who spent weekends at Nicaragua rallies and worked in the public defenders' office. (His wife, also an attorney, worked for the HRA.) A year ago, I started seeing his name in the newspapers. He'd been elected head of one of the unions and was leading his fellow lawyers in a walkout, tying up the criminal justice system while demanding a pay raise. Six months later, he and his wife moved to New Jersey, where taxes are lower and crime levels more tolerable.

Meanwhile, having been stunned once again last April by the amount of taxes I had to pay, I did a little arithmetic. As a free-lancer in New York City, I paid 15.3 percent Social Security, 28 percent federal income tax, 7.9 percent state income tax, 3.3 percent New York City income tax, and 4 percent New York City unincorporated business tax. Total: 58.5 percent. Sure, there were deductions here and there, but the final rate still came to more than 50 percent.

I think my leftist friend has outsmarted me. □

William Tucker, TAS's New York correspondent, is a writer for Forbes.

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CURRENT WISDOM

New York Times

What kind of stupid statement is this—Herbert Mitgang reviewing Lou Cannon's *President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime*:

. . . of course being President of the United States is the most important event in anyone's life, ex-actor or ex-anything else . . .

[April 24, 1991]

New Age Journal

In an age so full of glum news, suddenly Glad Tidings and good times for all:

For Green Women Only. We hear lots of grumbling about the environmental toll of disposable diapers, while the effects of mountains of discarded menstrual products remains a topic of more taboo. The nonprofit Menstrual Health Foundation, with its goal of "returning beauty and delight to the menstrual experience," is out to challenge all that. Their New Cycle cloth pads, made from 100 percent cotton flannel and decorated with a cheerful rosebud pattern, are biodegradable and nonallergenic and can be reused monthly for up to two years (the catalogue claims that they pay for themselves in one year).

The brochure suggests that these pads can make menstruation a spiritual, as well as ecological, experience: "To tuck your pad away at the end of your flow is to anticipate the return of your womanly vision and to prepare for the truth of being female once more." *Menstrual Health Foundation, PO Box 3248, Santa Rosa, CA 95402; (707)829-2744. Sampler pack: $8.91.*

[March-April 1991]

University of California Press

In the fall catalogue of the University of California Press, a sprightly notice for a study of a precursor of the National Organization for Women:

Women of the Klan
Racism and Gender in the 1920s
Kathleen M. Blee

Ignorant. Brutal. Male. These stereotypes of the Ku Klux Klan offer a misleading picture. In *Women of the Klan*, sociologist Kathleen Blee unveils an accurate portrait of a racist movement that appealed to ordinary people throughout the country. In so doing, she dismantles the popular notion that politically involved women are always inspired by pacifism, equality, and justice.

"All the better people," a former Klanswoman assures us, were in the Klan. During the 1920s, when the Klan was at its largest (about 5 million), perhaps half a million white native-born Protestant women joined the Women's Ku Klux Klan (WKKK). Like their male counterparts, Klanswomen held reactionary views on race, nationality, and religion. But their perspectives on gender roles were often progressive.

[Fall 1991]

Boston Herald

In Boston's greatest daily, ace reporter Howie Carr traps Sen. Edward M. Kennedy on the record just after the avuncular senator's three-martini breakfast:

"There's some additional something going on here, vaguely, and it's going to involve some kind of, uh, sexual harassment on Willie that because I was not told, I was not told ever, ever was told that the Palm Beach Police wanted to speak to me about an alleged incident of Willie Smith raping some girl.

"I was never told that. And the record when you see it and when it comes out will never, will not suggest that I was, and since that time that, uh, I found out that was the allegation, I have been available, uh, to the police and responded to all those questions and I certainly would have if I knew that the charge had been rape, would have done it.

"But that was never, that was never. I was never told that. If I had been told that, if I had been told that I certainly would have. But I was never told that and you're gonna have to look at the records of who told what to who."

[May 11, 1991]

Washington Post

Ageism? Yes, anthropologist Ellen Goodman spots ageism in the latest brutal rounds of criticism leveled against Edward M. Kennedy, the senior senator from Au Bar:

Down in Florida, Willie Smith is charged with sexual assault, but here the talk is of Ted. In the news the questions are about legal behavior, but across breakfast tables people are discussing unseemly behavior.

This is what most people remember as they cringe through each new report. That the senior senator woke up his son and his nephew in the middle of the night to go drinking. That this uncle and father drank with them in a bar until two or three. That he walked around in front of his son's date in just a shirt. That he can't keep his story straight.

There's not an impeachable offense in the lot. But it adds up to a picture of conduct unbecoming—a senator, a father, an elder. And not a few of the folk who have long defended him as a good senator are today embarrassed by him as a flawed man.

Not all of this may be fair. There is an edge of ageism and even Puritanism—in the gossip and the groans.

People want dignity in a 59-year-old. What is high-jinks in the young is humiliating in the supposed-to-be mature. An older man who makes a pass or who passes out is judged more harshly than his junior. It was a young woman who called the sight of the shirted senator "weird."

[May 18, 1991]

New Republic

In a review of poofter poetry, Mr. Christopher Benfey gets to the bottom of Miss Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's art:

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, who is widely regarded as one of the founders of gay literary theory, cuts a stylish, even flamboyant, figure in literary studies. She has supplemented her critical writing with a much-discussed series of autobiographical essays, one of which describes her early, imaginatively linked experiences of writing poetry and getting spanked—"the two most rhythmic things that happened" to her as a child.

[March 18, 1991]

West Australian

An illustrious Australian pacifist breaks wind:

I was one of the 100 demonstrators who protested against the presence of the USS *Missouri* in a West Australian port.

After passing an enormous queue of thousands of sightseers to a ship that had rained 16-inch shells on to a small third world country coastline and towns that had its navy, air force and army immobilized by the biggest air bombardment in history, it was pointed out that the *Missouri* was moored near a giant sheep container ship (also from the Persian Gulf).

I hope that some of the implications of these two ships—almost equal in size and their capacity to inflict so much pain and suffering to living creatures both animal and human—were appreciated by at least some of those visitors and pointed out to the thousands of children taken on to the battleship *Missouri.* —*Len Howard Falcon.*

[April 13, 1991]

Time

Mr. Lance Morrow, writing in the pages of a distinguished magazine of record, proffers an advertisement for a simple, unadorned, straightforward lout:

Kennedy somehow calls forth nagging mysteries of American politics and psychology. He is a lightning rod with strange electricities still firing in the air around him—passions that are not always his responsibility but may emanate from psychic disturbances in the country itself. America does not have a completely healthy relationship with the Kennedys.

Ernest Hemingway wrote: "The most complicated subject that I know, since I am a man, is a man's life." Ted Kennedy is a complicated man. The picture of him as Palm Beach boozer, lout and tabloid grotesque is one version. He has other versions—more interesting selves. Alcohol, or some other compulsion, may drive him now and then to bizarre and almost infantile behavior. But Ted Kennedy also is a remarkable and serious figure.

[April 29, 1991]

Common Sense

(Notre Dame, Indiana)

The pretty words of Fiona Pitt-Kethley ruminated upon by three excellent candidates for the Notre Dame cheerleading squad:

A DISCUSSION OF FIONA PITT-KETHLEY'S POEMS

M: Gloria-Jean Masciarotte
P: Kathy Psomiades
S: Alicia Sierra

M: When you first came to me the thing that immediately struck me was: What is our function? It's almost like we're the prophylactic on any . . . sex happening with these poems . . . because we have this privileged discursive moment in which we'll explain the poem . . . this is a problem. . . . What's the point of having a poem if we have to have this discussion about it? That's the first problem I see . . . which brings us to the second problem: Isn't discourse itself sexual? I mean, you're missing the point . . . using Foucault, . . . the repressive hypothesis is that you repress it by not having it there. But isn't even our discussion of the poem furthering the sexual content or the sexual activity by continuing to talk about it? It doesn't have to be doing the sex act or talking about the sex act, but just talking about sex in general is sexual in that it is sexual play. So, then you are getting more sex instead of less sex by us talking about it.

P: Yeah, but it's a different discourse. I mean, . . . repression is talking about sex too, right? So, . . . the whole fact that even this has shock value is predicated on the repressive hypothesis being in play.

M: Right, but . . . is our discussion supposed to be the repression? That's what I think . . . The way it's situated is that, instead of the repression being not printing the poem, you have this curious Foucauldian moment where instead of actually not printing the poem, we actually have the poem and then we're the repressive mechanism; our discussion is going to contain the poems, or repress any sensational shock value.

P: But then there's also, of course, the risk of our discussion becoming contaminated by the poem.

M: Well, can it not be? I mean, it's obvious . . .

P: . . . I mean, there will be readers for whom our discussion is merely another one of those women talking about sex.

M: Well that's what I mean when I first said: "Isn't this discussion even more sexual?" You get further discussion about women talking about sex, so—

S: Yeah, but, it's not just any women, it's women who professionally engage in sexual discourse . . .

P: You mean professors or prostitutes?

S: Professors.

[March 1991]

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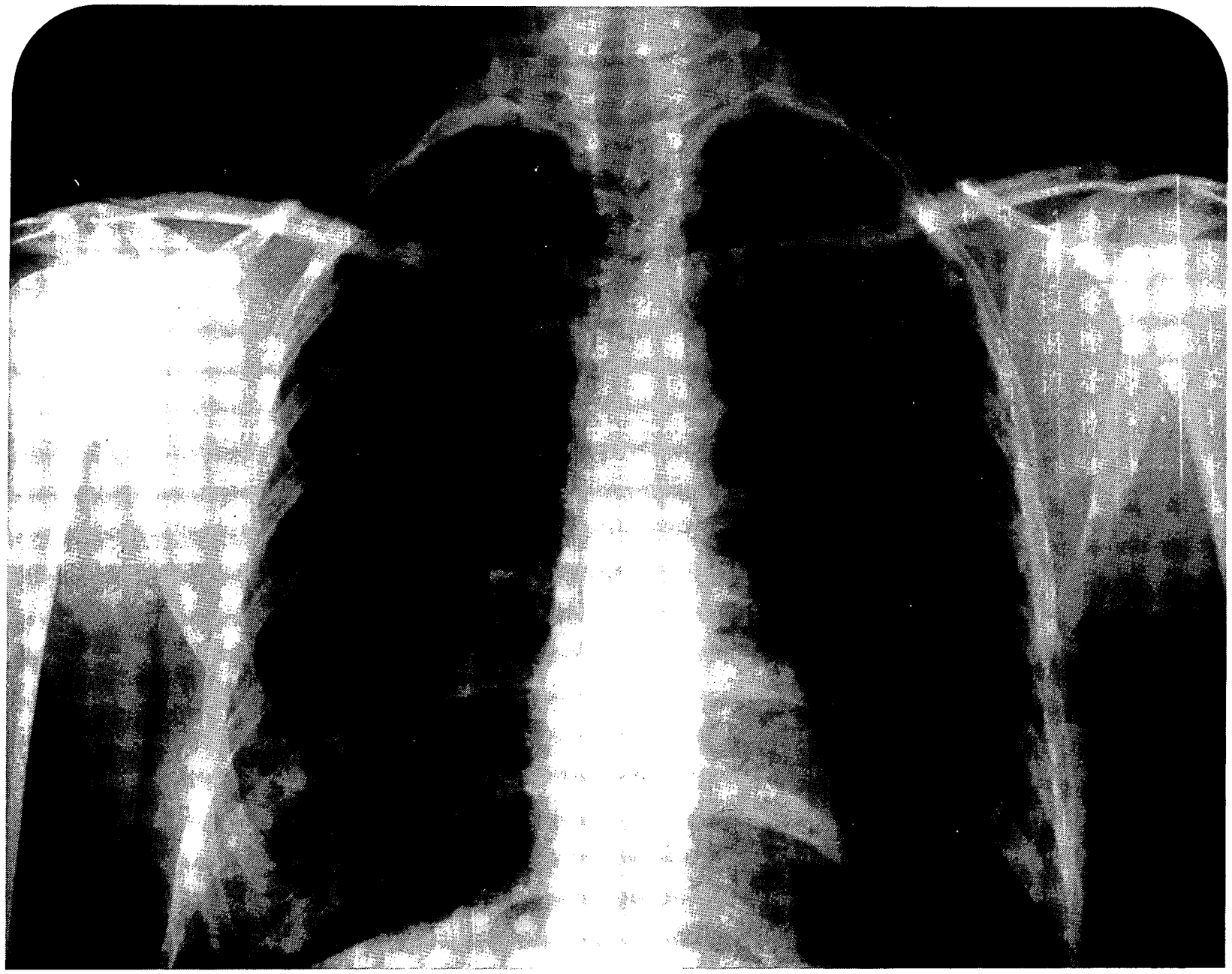

If a doctor can't find asbestos damage here, a lawyer will.

These days, asbestos litigation is fast becoming a giant grab bag. And nobody's grabbing more than America's personal injury lawyers. These opportunists are rounding up workers all across the country, herding them into vans equipped with x-ray and breathing machinery, and examining them for traces of asbestos-related disease.

The lawyers who invented this screening technique brought suits in 12 states on behalf of 8,000 tire workers. Yet in a May 1990 opinion, a Kansas City district judge called their litigation project "a professional farce...The process makes a mockery of the practices of law and medicine."

As Forbes pointed out in a February 18th cover story, it's not just lawyers that are at fault, but the vagueness of the law itself. Consider the case of a mechanic who had occasional contact with tractor parts containing not-so-dangerous chrysotile asbestos. When he died from cancer, lawyers saw to it that his wife received a large settlement from the companies that made those parts. But in all likelihood, his death was caused by deadly amphibole asbestos, which he was exposed to when he worked at a naval shipyard during World War II.

Right now, the U.S. has 115,000 pending asbestos cases. Forbes has learned that between 65% and 80% of the claimants involved in them have symptomless maladies unrelated to asbestos. Then why is it that asbestos claims have already forced 15 companies into bankruptcy? And why is it that litigation could end up costing companies, and their insurers, as much as $100 billion?

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